# THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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## THE POUND OF FLESH

*'He shall have nothing but the penalty'*

BY ALICE THORNTON

'I SHOULD think,' March went on musingly, 'that when God sees what poor finite creatures can bear, hemmed round with this eternal darkness of death, He must respect us!'

I must have memorized the lines from the Howells novel in some literature class, in the days when quotations were required as a daily rite. Forgotten in the intervening years, one day in prison I found myself repeating the words. I take them again, perhaps as a shield, while I explain that in this chronicle I make no plea for personal consideration. I committed a crime; I have no desire to minimize its seriousness. The State meted out its penalty; I tried to meet it honestly and bravely. Now society is satisfied that I have been sufficiently punished, although, of course, my actual punishment has never been for an instant within the State's power to inflict or withhold. I am free, and this recital of my experience has one raison d'être: it may serve to interpret certain aspects of the penal problem.

My incarceration of several years was passed in a prison which is ranked as 'one of the best in the country.' My authority for this rating was one of the prison's minor officials, so I beg you to accept it as accurate. I had at that time existed through the first unforgettable weeks. I had become familiar with the rasping, screaming voice in which the head matron issued her commands and with the stupid, brutal discipline of a deputy warden who was frequently somewhat intoxicated. I had sat at a table, furnished with chipped granite-ware dishes, — never sterilized, — where half the diners were a menace to their neighbors. I knew the purposeless, endless, daily work; the purposeless, hopeless life. I ventured the opinion that any sane person would judge my present dwelling-place the most loathsome spot in the interstellar spaces.

The defense was prompt. 'Well, Miss —— ought to know. She's lectured all over about prisons, and she says that this is the only one where the women get any butter.'

I remembered that at breakfast and at supper I had detected a microscopic golden speck upon my plate, about the quantity Titania might use on her



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daintiest lettuce-sandwich, and I became respectful, almost reverent. For upon that molecule of butter rested an institution's reputation as 'one of the best in the country.'

Perhaps this is a flippant approach to a serious problem, but I wonder if the woman's estimate was unusually superficial.

The average visitor or inspector who goes through an institution of this nature sees the buildings, a degree of cleanliness and sanitation, men and women silently working. He has, perhaps, talked to prison officials — trimly uniformed guards and white-garbed matrons. He is shown the daily menu, which, on paper at least, appears satisfying; the chapel, where services — and occasionally entertainments — are held on Sunday. In the men's dining-room he sees a screen which tells of moving-picture exhibitions in winter, and bulletins that herald the Saturday baseball games in summer. At the front of the building are the usual spectacular flower-beds, maintained at considerable expense and infinite care for the benefit of the passers-by. There is a library — an inadequate one — and a school — also inadequate. An inmate may hold subscriptions to several magazines and receive practically an unlimited number of books; he may, at his own expense, take correspondence courses with the State University's extension department.

Each of these things represents altruistic effort on the part of former wardens or members of the State Board of Control, and one who has suffered enforced confinement must have a lively appreciation of the effect of these balancing, normal influences. But valuable as these ameliorating efforts may be, they are not, in the slightest degree, a solution of the penal problem.

## I

People who consider the prison problem at all are divided into two groups.

The conservative defends the present system, based as it is on the Hebraic eye-for-eye conception of punishment. To him, all folk outside the prison wall are morally more or less white. Those within its shadow are varying shades of black, the intensity of the blackness being nicely graded by the term of sentence which each convict carries, like a label, about his neck: the man with a one-year sentence is not so bad as he with five, and so on, the 'lifer' being the blackest of all. 'And why pamper a lot of criminals that the courts have gone to the expense of convicting?'

The modern penologist is not a sentimentalist; he is a scientist. He feels a degree of responsibility as to prison conditions, but his chief interest must always be in the personality of the offender.

Now those who incur punishment have been aptly divided into three classes: —

> Those whose offenses are isolated and are the result of sudden temptation or extreme emotional states — 'the accidental criminals.'
>
> Those whose offenses are the consequence of an inherent lack of self-control.
>
> Those who, being as it were short-circuited by adverse circumstances from the main herd, have chosen the adventure of 'living without the law.'

I should undoubtedly be classified under the first division. My family were folk of moderate means; my father was a professional man, kindly and honorable. I had a happy childhood and a pleasant youth. Graduating from one of the great universities, I became a skillful worker, a useful member

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of society. I was very eager to have my life count for something worth while in the sum total of things. I was leading an irreproachable, conventional existence when I made my one horrible mistake.

Then came the interlude of prison incarceration. Gone were the amenities of life, the out-of-doors I had loved so well. Beyond the iron gates waited my father, bent with grief, with no reproaches for the anguish I had brought him, only that patient paternal love that has always passed understanding. But I am not to attempt another *De Profundis*. My story has interest only as it shows something of the economic and social side of prison life.

There were twenty-five women inmates of the prison when I entered, and all — the feeble-minded, the alcoholic and drug addict, the senile, the young offender, the early dement, the docile and the vicious, the weak and the strong, the highly nervous and the stolid — all were under one prison discipline. The prison was, for a few, a haven of rest; others endured it stoically; for some it was continuous unspeakable torture.

A year of punishment would not mean the same to any two individuals. To Violet, a big healthy animal with innumerable jail and prison episodes in her past, twelve months behind bars meant a rest and recuperation, although it probably was inconvenient to be separated from drink. When she went back to her kind there would be no stigma, no ostracism. With frail little Gloria it was different. If you know Mrs. Wharton's *Glimpses of the Moon* you will recall the golden lady whose many lovers were taken quite as matter of course by her husband and friends. Gloria's lover was not taken so complacently by her husband, and she was serving a sentence on an adultery charge. What might be considered merely as an *affaire d'amour* in one social stratum may be in another a crime punishable by penal servitude.

To my surprise I did not find anyone in the group about me who conformed to my previous ideas of the criminal type. I began to take stock of the conventional prejudices and unfounded beliefs that had been mine when I was a respectable member of society. In the first place, I had never thought clearly enough to differentiate between the legal concept — the individual convicted, sentenced, imprisoned for crime — and the metaphysical concept of the offender against the ethical code, the incarnation of sin doomed quite naturally to punishment. Contradictory to but nevertheless associated with these Hebraic notions were memories of the annals of the Jukes family, some vague impressions of the theories of Lombroso. I persisted in the idea that there was a criminal type, different from the main group of human beings.

Off in another part of the mental storehouse were the sinners and criminals of fiction and history — Raffles, Arsène Lupin, and the women of that fascinating species. Over against the gory Clytemnestra and Lucrezia Borgia were the pictures of Tess of the D'Urbervilles, pathetic little Hetty of *Adam Bede*, Hester Prynne, Dahlia Fleming, Lady Macbeth, Hamlet, Peter Ibbetson, and, because the story as written in the Book of Kings has always seemed to me the one perfect biography, David, the shepherd king, who for love of a beautiful woman put Uriah at the front of the battle. Perhaps it is disconcerting to think that the man whose poems are sung every Sunday in the orthodox churches, had he lived in this century, might have been held on a manslaughter charge and been the theme of yellow-press stories. Because of the genius of Hardy, Meredith, and the other authors,

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these folk had motives and dossiers which I understood perfectly. They were vivid personalities; the criminal was an abstraction.

With amazement and bewilderment I was finding it necessary to reject most of the popular fallacies which I had regarding crime; those idle theories seemed quite unrelated to the grim facts of this appalling situation. I found that the guilty are not always punished nor the virtuous rewarded; neither deathbed confessions nor uneasy consciences asserted themselves to clear those who were unjustly suffering. I learned that the woman serving a forty-year sentence was not necessarily forty times as dangerous as the woman serving one year. What every penologist knows — and no one else does — is that disorderly living does far more injury to a community than the few crimes which earn for their perpetrators long terms of penal servitude. If Tess had been restored to society she would have been an asset, not the menace that a diseased, vicious prostitute might be.

## II

The modern penal system is credited with several aims besides the elemental punitive one.

First: it acts as a deterrent to incipient crime — a logical reason; but it might be worth while to ask why it is, and under what circumstances, that the certainty of punishment does *not* deter individuals from crime.

Second: society demands, for its protection, segregation under restriction of its highly antisocial members — a valid, universally recognized right, but one which implies that when the incarcerated man shows himself capable of being an asset to society he should be allowed to retake his place therein.

Third: a penal system should be *remedial, reconstructive, reformatory.* My information of what has been accomplished in the institutions designated as reform schools or reformatories has been acquired through reading only, but as to what is being done toward 're-formation' in one of the best prisons in the country, what preparation the woman convict receives to prepare her for a successful rehabilitation when the period of incarceration is past, my knowledge is painfully accurate.

There was nothing that could possibly be construed as reformatory or constructive in my prison experience; nothing that would help one to meet the terrific problem of facing life later and earning a livelihood. Some of the saddest memories of prison life are those of the outgoing prisoners. A woman would always know to a day how much time remained of her sentence. There would be joy when it was a year, six months, one month. But toward the end, especially with those that were superior, the eagerness would be replaced with dread, a fear of going back into a hostile world. It was not unusual for a woman to go out who had no friends or home to receive her; no certainty of employment. She was usually an unskilled laborer, with only the few dollars given her by the State to support her until work could be obtained. And it is superfluous to add that it is not easy for an ex-convict, no matter what her story, to obtain work.

The statistics that give the percentages of recidivists are astounding to the uninitiated. This prison rated forty-five per cent and it is the lowest figure I have seen quoted for any penal institution. I am inclined to think this percentage is underrated. After what I have seen of the mediæval methods of treating the prisoner, and since I know something of the difficulties of life after one has left prison, I wonder that the percentage is not one hundred.

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During my incarceration one poor chap was released after twenty years' imprisonment. Three days later he was found in the early morning, crouched down in a corner of the inner yard, having crept back — nobody knew how — past the guard and over the great wall. The matron who told me of the incident considered it a tribute to the beneficent atmosphere of the place, whereas it was, of course, a proof how utterly the unnatural prison-life unfits one for this modern, complex existence. Sadder was the story of the man who, after waiting years for a pardon, went mad less than a week after his release.

It is upon the return to the world that the test comes, not only of the prisoner but of the prison. If the purpose of the prison is to prevent crime as well as to punish the criminal, some account should be taken of the means of restoring the delinquent to society.

I and these other women have failed somehow; but with few exceptions we shall return to our communities. Do you expect us to come back better or worse for the arid, soul-wrecking years? Are we coming back penniless, or practically so? Are we still untaught, unskilled workers? Is there anyone to help us make the first difficult adjustments to a normal life? Please do not readjust your halo and say that someone ought to have attended to these things. No one has — or will, until there is a more general understanding of the basic facts regarding corrective institutions.

It is easier to get accurate information regarding the ex-prisoner's purse and economic status than it is to ascertain her mental and spiritual reaction to the imprisonment. Her conduct will be governed by her mental life, and the future conduct of an offender is a matter of certain importance. When a woman is put in prison, unfortunately she remains a human being, with all the instincts, emotions, reactions of a creature who is alive. The routine and discipline of the prison shut down on normal action and on this instinctive and emotional life, and hold the woman in a constant state of emotional stress and conflict. I believe the aftermath of the years of abnormal mental repressions, plus anxiety and the hatred of the officials and the environment, is the most serious consequence of prison life.

Consider the fact that we were not allowed to go out of doors for ten successive months — from the middle of September until the following July. During the midsummer months, when the heat was most intense, we were allowed out of doors but two hours and a half during the week: two hours on Saturday afternoon; a half hour on Sunday. (How we dreaded Sunday!) That is one bit of prison discipline. Souls need sunshine and fresh air just as much as bodies do.

## III

I first saw the other women prisoners on a Saturday afternoon, when permission was granted for the two hours out of doors.

Huddled against the shade of the great stone wall was a group of women the like of whom I had never seen before. There were no beautiful, thwarted adventuresses, no regal Clytemnestras or Lucrezia Borgias, no lynx-eyed Rafflettes. There was the sorriest company of human beings imaginable: haggard middle-aged women; young girls from the streets. Later I was to find that these criminals, delinquents, offenders against the majesty of the law, were really here not so much because they were 'wicked' as because they were physically handicapped,

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mentally defective, products of an inferior environment. I found unskilled workers, illiterates, foreigners unacquainted with the life of a new country. The majority were penniless; many were friendless. There were economic, pathological, sociological causes for the failure of these women to be assets instead of the liabilities they unquestionably were to their communities. And these pariahs, these pathetic outcasts, products of poverty and misfortune in many cases, were 'the dead and poisonous matter, foreign and dangerous to the social body,' of which the sociologist speaks.

There were a few who had long sentences, but the most would return to society after an incarceration of one or two years. There was no thought given as to how the human beings who had to bear years of this unnatural life were to survive it; no consideration as to the problem of rehabilitation of the woman after she left prison.

The little group sat on benches in the shade of the great wall; a guard, gun on shoulder, paced above them, a matron sat in front of them. The women were dressed in faded, patched blue dresses; to me they all appeared old, bedraggled, hideous; it did not seem possible that I could ever mingle with them. Vainly I said to myself that I was infinitely more guilty than any of them, because I had had the training, the advantages of birth and environment that should have made impossible my crime; that my clothes were as hideous as theirs. But I could not go near them. However, my isolation was of short duration; first came Selma and Margaret, then Violet, Sally, and Fannie; one by one, the entire group drifted over and surrounded me. They were very curious, although they meant only to be friendly, but the vociferous sympathy was distasteful to me then. Later I came to know and like and be deeply interested in many of them, and I found kindness, selfishness, curiosity, gossip, generosity, in about the same proportion as outside prison walls.

Never have I seen people who loved to sing as did these women. Their only song books were some Moody and Sankey hymnals, evidently bequeathed to the institution years before. The head matron played the breathless little yellow organ, and as she evidently deemed it ungodly to strike a lively tempo on Sunday, the women sang 'Rescue the Perishing,' 'Go Bury Thy Sorrow,' to the slowest time I have ever heard. The most dolorous hymns were without exception the most popular. My friend, the little assistant-matron, was musical and sang very well, but the matron jealously held her prerogative as music master.

A friend sent me some song books, compiled for community singing, and on Saturday afternoons, when we could not go out of doors, we gathered around the organ and sang. How the girls loved it! (Have I said before that the women prisoners, regardless of age, were always designated as 'the girls'?) I can even now see Marie, so pimply and soiled, closing her eyes in ecstasy as she swung into the chorus of 'Love's Old Sweet Song'; and the saffron-tinted Ellen adored 'Ye Banks and Braes of Bonnie Doon,' which with joyful abandon she sang exactly off key, although I am sure she did not have the vaguest idea what a brae of Bonnie Doon might be. And Margaret — she must have been a dear girl once, with her pretty red-gold hair and bright brown eyes; now she was stooped and haggard. 'They call me a criminal drunkard,' she gravely explained to me. Margaret loved 'America the Beautiful.'

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain,

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America, America, God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea
to shining sea!

'To think,' she said in a scandalized tone, 'I never knew that song! If you'll learn it to me before I go, I'll give you my Easter lily.' Her Easter lily was her most cherished possession — a bedraggled remnant in a battered tin can.

It would have been an excellent and practical thing if, at least once a week, the women could have stayed in the sewing-room after supper to sing, under the direction of a competent leader. They could have learned the fine and dignified religious hymns for the Sunday service, the beloved folk-songs, and some of the better vivacious popular music. It would have been a brief period of respite and happiness, and surely a Christian State ought not to begrudge that.

I was always amused by Violet, a disreputable old soul who in a former existence must have been a pirate. We all admired Violet for an Oliver Twistish performance. On wash days a lunch of dry bread, syrup, and the indescribable coffee was served. The syrup was always heavily watered, but this morning it was water slightly tinctured with syrup. 'Pass the water,' said Violet in her stentorian tones, pointing to the syrup jug. Of course she was promptly reported to the deputy warden and locked in her cell for two days, with orders that she was to have nothing to eat. She was at once a heroine and a martyr, and the ravens that fed Elijah might profitably have envied the efficient, if mysterious, manner in which Violet was kept supplied with food.

And it is with a smile that I recall dusky Lily Belle who, in spite of her name, was a very incarnation of Topsy. On Christmas Eve a lusty wailing was heard from Lily Belle's room. The night matron hastened to investigate. 'What in the world is the matter, Lily Belle?' she asked. 'I'm crying because —— is crying,' was the reply. The matron came to my door, and I assured her that I was quite calm. Lily Belle's vociferous grief stopped instantly. 'Well, I thought I heard her crying 'cause she was here at Christmas time — and she's been good to me — so I cried, too.' A nice tribute of friendship, was it not?

There were two methods of amusement furnished by the State: the moving pictures, which were occasionally shown Sunday afternoons, and a phonograph. A popular and effective punishment was to deprive the prisoners of cinema privileges; but if the officers were good-natured we sometimes saw one movie each month during the winter. Sentimental plays with very, very happy endings were most popular, and the comedies wherein the actors threw dishes and furniture at one another, fell indiscriminately from mighty cliffs, housetops, balloons, and telegraph poles into startling predicaments, were hailed with howls of laughter. Roars of mirth invariably greeted anything not comprehended. A war play was shown in which an American army officer, maddened by the tortures which his wife, captured by the Germans, had undergone, retaliated with a revenge that was unique and sickening in its pictured detail. The tragedy was mistaken for a burlesque comedy, and as the intensity deepened the mirth increased, until, when the awful climax was reached, my neighbor was wiping tears of delight from her cheeks.

Another time I was interested in the tense interest of Estelle, who sat at my left. Now Estelle was a connoisseur in prisons, having served sentences for theft in various States on her migration West. If she lives long enough she will probably work through to San Quentin. In the screened play

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there was a hot pursuit of a thief and, as Estelle had been the object of numerous similar pursuits, I thought her sympathy would be entirely with the culprit. But instead her reaction was quite the conventional one. 'Get him,' she muttered, as a detective appeared; 'Catch him,' when the police dashed in; and when the guilty one was driven off in a patrol wagon she subsided, content.

The phonograph played for two hours every Saturday and Sunday night, and was not altogether a blessing. The collection of records was limited and mediocre, and to one who had musical discrimination it was agony to have to listen to some of the blatant tunes played over and over again, year after year. Thinking to be philanthropic, I asked to have some records of a higher standard sent to me. Their reception was interesting. Tosti's 'Serenade,' sung by Gluck, was always asked for by the two Italians, Kreisler's 'Viennese Caprice' was received with silent tolerance, but Galli-Curci's 'Valse Song' from *Romeo and Juliet* was always the signal for hearty laughter. As the lovely voice rose with incredible delicacy and brilliance to the dramatic climax, it would be drowned by roars of Gargantuan mirth.

Two talking records were very popular, and everyone always laughed exactly in the same places: as Cohen spills his soup, and when Uncle Josh first ate ice cream at a remarkable ultrafashionable New York reception. Custom never staled, age never withered, the infinite variety of these jokes.

## IV

Women offenders as a class present several distinctive points which make them and their redemption — if there be a possible redemption — a problem unlike that of the male delinquent. In the first place, the average of intelligence is much higher in the men's prison than in the women's. There are always men of good mental capacity and fair or even superior education on the list of male criminals. There were few women of average ability in the prison I knew; of the hundred or more who served sentences in the course of my own durance only two besides myself had attended a secondary school. I was the only woman with more than a high-school education, the only one trained for a profession. Of course there are obvious reasons for this difference of mental type: the woman of the higher class, social or mental, is not subject to economic stress or temptations as is the man; she is less adventurous; she is more fearful of overstepping the conventions. If she does break the law she is not so liable to conviction as a man.

My statistics have an approximate accuracy, although my methods of compiling them might annoy a scientist; but as every State publishes annual or biennial reports of its corrective institutions, these can be consulted if exact information is desired. I have not the general, classified knowledge such as a biologist might have of the *Coleoptera;* I knew these delinquents as a woman knows her neighbors. I have written the names of all the women I could remember whom I knew during my stay in prison, and then made my deductions from this list. I can remember just one hundred and four individuals. Three of these were serving life sentences; five others, sentences varying from six to twenty-five years. Two were incendiaries. Three had been found guilty of perjury. About thirty were guilty of some form of theft, most often petty larceny. One girl had been sentenced for four years for stealing a dress valued at twenty-five dollars.

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That same month two other young girls had been sent to prison from another court for theft of clothing valued at less than fifty dollars, for which they were to serve nine months. Number 20012 had forged a note, but she was an accessory to crime rather than a principal; she would not have had the initiative to do the thing alone. By far the heaviest percentage of convictions was on the adultery charge. More than fifty per cent of the women with whom I came in contact during this period were held on this or relative charges, which would mean that there was a pretty consistent thirty-three per cent of the inhabitants of the women's prison who were members of an ancient profession.

Before the conclusion is reached that prison is exactly the place for the prostitute, it might be logical to ponder several things. It is annoying to consider that there are at large in society individuals just as guilty of antisocial conduct as some of its convicted members — a fact which condones no offense, but which must be taken into consideration if the penal problem as a whole is studied.

Further, fifty prostitutes must have been a very small percentage of the members of their calling in the State; the segregation of such a minority could hardly be considered a remedy of the social evil. In this State the penalty for the offense under discussion varied from one to three years, so that society had but a brief respite from the presence of this group. What is of the utmost importance is that these women, practically without exception, would return to the same sort of life after they left prison. The more intelligent would be more crafty; but the most significant point is that there were few intelligent ones.

The prostitute is not to be dismissed with a clever epigram or with a condemnation of her wickedness; she is distinctly the product of poverty, bad environment, inferior human stock, sometimes — but infrequently — of misfortune. The pathetic creatures that get into prison have none of the allure or picturesqueness of the demimondaine featured in popular plays on the New York stage. I saw but one of this type — Pearl Puhr. When the exotic Pearl came to us she was delightful to look upon, with her chic frock and an exquisite coat built on the lines and with the color which bespoke a good maker. Pearl had dignity, assurance, poise. She told of her car of excellent make, her talking machine of the latest de luxe model, her child in an Eastern school. She had been the head of a large and flourishing 'establishment.' I asked her why and how the fall from all this comfort and luxury. She was tremendously disgusted. 'It was this business of women voting. I took all of my girls down to vote for the Democratic candidates, and the Republicans got in, and they had us pinched because we voted the wrong way. Now, if we had never voted —' I may have this story confused as to detail. Possibly Pearl voted for the Republicans. However, someone, Democrat or Republican, had pity on her plight, and within two weeks after her entrance to prison she was released on a writ of error — the only case where I saw the writ of error used. The Wassermann given when she entered showed a positive test. She had never denied the nature or the prosperity of her trade.

If I should follow the episode of Pearl with that of Harriet, a young girl who had left high school in her first year to marry, and a few months later to elope with a book agent, — arrested within two days, sentenced within a week, — silly, irresponsible, unmoral, sweet-tempered, never vicious, you would get a glimpse of the complications that

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have to be met, not only that justice be enforced, but that the prison may serve a useful purpose.

## V

I regret that I have not a pen facile enough to give you clear portraits of these women I knew so well. I do not want to write sob stuff; there were unjust sentences; two innocent women were imprisoned; there was brutality; but these things are of minor importance. Any attempt at a solution of the penal problem must always be centred about the individual delinquent, and until there is an intelligent attempt *to learn why the woman has failed*, until an effort is made to make her wholesome and self-reliant, physically and mentally, to make her antisocial life not worth while, all talk of prison reform is idle.

The old idea of the offender is the metaphysical one, based upon the theory of the freedom of the will and the infallibility of the conscience. The will was a general director of conduct; the conscience was an infallible consultant in deciding between what was right and what was wrong. The more modern idea regards the phenomena of volition, like any other phenomena, as subject to natural laws, inevitably the results of definite antecedents — heredity, education, environment, all previous experiences. A psychical phenomenon must have just as definite a cause as would a physical phenomenon, and one must understand the facts in each case. This later theory is so universally accepted that it seems superfluous to quote it; but the fact remains that practically all penal servitude is based on the older theory that we who have offended are deliberate trangressors and therefore merit condign punishment. Perhaps I did; but not all of these others.

Number 20001 came to prison dressed in her best, a percale bungalow apron, which had been freshly laundered when she left the jail eight hours before for the trip across the State on dusty railroad trains. She was much distressed over her untidy appearance when she arrived. Nineteen years old, fair mentality, good-natured. Her family manor had been an old box-car, refitted as box-cars sometimes are for residential purposes for railroad employees. The day after she came she saw a dress which was being made in the sewing-room for a girl who was about to leave. Now these going-away gowns, although practical, are not anything to get excited about, but to Number 20001 a wonderful possibility arose: 'When I go away can I have a new dress?' When she left prison she had her first new dress, but she had been taught no trade and shown no way to earn honestly other new frocks.

Number 20002 had the appearance and pertness of a Paris street gamin. She was pretty except that her two front teeth were missing — a loss which caused her deep despair. How to obtain money to have these missing teeth replaced was the one problem of her life. She met it romantically and, let us hope, satisfactorily. She wrote a suitor that if he would send the money to pay for the new incisors she would marry him when she was free. She told of a hard, barren childhood, as the drudge in a farmer's family. 'I worked for my keep when I was ten years old. No, I never went to school. I wish you could learn me to read. It's fierce being on the street-car when you can't read the signs. And you know how them street-car conductors talk, so that you can't understand them. If I ain't never been that way before, I don't know where to get off.' And she left prison without learning how to read the street-car signs.

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Number 20004 was a big Polish woman, a widow of thirty-five, the mother of three children to whom she was devoted, an excellent cook, an indefatigable but inefficient worker, erratic to the last degree, an illiterate, with the mentality and unmorality of a seven-year-old child. When I was housekeeper in the matron's home, Number 20004 was assigned as my assistant. Ours was an exciting friendship; on Monday she would love me to distraction; on Wednesday I was her bitterest enemy; by Saturday the chances were even as to whether I was her 'heart's ownest' or Enemy Number One. She broke every rule in the institution and was never punished. She said to me one day, 'The reason the matron hates you so is because you are quiet and polite. Act like you was a fool; she likes that!' And a demonstration would follow of servile obsequiousness. But even to evade the matron's frightful tongue I could not stoop to that. Number 20004 would sometimes become greatly aggrieved. ''T ain't fair; I learn you how to make swell pie-crust 'nd gravy 'nd such things what I can. You should learn me how to read in English; then I could read them swell receipts 'nd get a swell job in a restaurant.'

One day she picked up an advertisement that had an attractively colored picture of gold-and-brown biscuits.

'R-o-y-a-l B-a-k-i-n-g P-o-w-d-e-r,' she slowly spelled, following the letters with her chubby finger. 'That says, "Parkin' House rolls." It's lucky I can read some, ain't it? Now some of those girls is so dumb they can't read nothin'.' She left before our school was started, but it is doubtful whether she would have had the concentration necessary to learn to read.

Number 20005 was of the small and exclusive class known as 'model' prisoners. One did not earn this distinction — nor deserve it for any perceptible reason. The implication was that the model prisoner had never been reported for the further degrees of punishment; the title was supposed to designate docility and abject submission to the endless code of rules. In reality a model prisoner was either a high favorite with officials or else of so negligible and colorless a personality as to be practically invisible to the eye. Number 20005 had ponderous feet that stumbled and blundered along, a big clumsy body, above which, to one's surprise, was a handsome face — a face that would have been strikingly beautiful had it been lighted by personality and intelligence. There were strong regular features, thick, lustrous brown hair, and large dark eyes that were pathetically bovine. She was ambitious to further her education; confidentially she told me that she wanted to learn how to use big words, the popular conception there of a higher education; but the poor dear could never get beyond the first part of the Third Reader, although she pored over this with endless patience. She was a wonder in the garden, where she could lift a shovel of dirt with the ease of a strong man. She loved to help me with my flower garden, and the dexterity with which she transplanted the young plants, her interest in each one, were pleasant to see. 'Whatever I plant grows; see!' And it did. She braided quaint old-fashioned rugs; she was a wizard with the flatiron, the warden's finest laundry work always falling to her share. She earned *one cent a day*, and although outside of prison she had five children it never occurred to her to ask for more. She was a model prisoner.

Number 20006 always reminded me of a white rabbit — not Alice's, but just any white rabbit. She had had

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countless children by a feeble-minded husband. One day he disappeared and Number 20006, who was decidedly of the clinging-vine type, transferred her brood and her affections to another man with whom she lived without benefit of the clergy — hence the prison sentence. Some of the children were parked in a charitable institution and others with charitable folk throughout the county. Number 20006 was toothless, anæmic, undernourished; her knowledge of housewifery or sewing was practically nil. One does not have to be a rabid prison-reformer to realize that she needed nourishing food, instruction in the responsibilities of maternity, artificial teeth, and a working knowledge of the basic household-arts, instead of the barren drudgery of penal discipline.

I was always fond of Number 20007, a little German woman whose worthless husband had left her with several children to support. She showed me her wedding picture — she stiffly happy in an atrocious veil, he resplendent with a red carnation in his buttonhole. 'He was a fine man,' she said; 'the only trouble was that he ran away when we had so many children.' This woman had earned her living by scrubbing and cleaning two saloons. She stole some money, — 'I needed it something fierce,' — was caught, convicted, sentenced to a year in prison. Her children were put in a charitable institution during her incarceration. She was a tireless worker, good-natured, kindly. After her sentence expired, she returned to the city with ten dollars in her purse, no job, a branded criminal. Would it not have been more wise and merciful if the State had sent Number 20007 back to her flock with a trade, with some craft or knowledge that would make her self-reliant and self-supporting?

Consider the story of Number 20008, a lovely young creature, slender and lithe and frail, with a skin like ivory and gorgeous auburn hair. Her people had been nice small-town folk in a Western state. She had met and married a good-looking stranger with charming manners. Later he proved to be a member of a gang of gunmen who drew heavy sentences for an attempted bank robbery. She herself had been involved sufficiently to draw a light sentence. She had accepted the standards and the cheap cynicism of the man she loved, but basically she was still the honest small-town girl. Of all my pupils she was by far the most superior, keenly appreciative and responsive. Had the stage directions been just a little different, she might have been a beautiful and talented college girl. She talked to me many times of her future. 'I do not mind this much, because I had rather be near my husband than any place else; but I do wish that I could be using this time to prepare myself to be self-supporting after I leave here.'

Number 20009 would have been classed by the old school of penologists as a confirmed criminal; the modern psychiatrist might interpret her mental processes otherwise. Born in Sweden, she migrated to the United States when a young girl. Meagre education; employed as a house servant; married; one child. She had previously served sentences in three other prisons for theft, always petty larceny. She took much pride in telling of these exploits and of her adroitness in theft; offered to tutor the younger girls in the gentle art; had a mania for collecting things — bits of ribbon, bright paper, books, scraps of cloth, from which she would make amazingly clever bits of fancywork. She was an expert seamstress and a good cook; worked constantly with a nervous energy that made one pity the poor, frail body. Fifty years old, she looked seventy, except that her hair was

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brown, abundant, and well cared for. She was very generous. At Christmas she gave me an elaborate pincushion, made entirely from materials which she had stolen from me! Immaculate, almost austere in her personal habits. I asked her why she stole when she was able to earn a good living by sewing or doing housework. 'Always I would think, "Now I have got a good place and these folks are good to me and I can always have a home here," and then I would see something that would just make me take it. This last time I was working for a lady and she was good to me, and I said, "Never again." And she had a parasol that I thought was the homeliest one I ever saw; and I stole that parasol, and some of her stockings that were too big for me, and some money — and here I am. The judge said he could give me two years or ten, and I told him to give me the ten years. Now I will die here, I hope. I can't make myself behave when I am outside.' She had lived in the state less than two months when she was arrested. The taxpayers will have to care for her for ten years.

Although I had lived for several years with women whose past experiences might seem to warrant it, I had heard no obscenity and little profanity; but when Number 20010 came a reign of terror began for all of us. On the slightest provocation streams of unspeakable lewdness and invective would flow forth. The intelligent matron, who was responsible for several radical improvements, was genuinely interested in the girl, only twenty-three years old. The newcomer had previously run away from a girls' reformatory and had been traveling with a street carnival when arrested. The matron tried to direct the young thing's tremendous energy and vitality into useful channels, and the girl tried to respond. For several days she would be docile and work energetically; then an explosion would follow that shook the very stones in the hardened walls. With confinement she became increasingly irritable and unmanageable, and it was finally necessary, for the protection of the matrons and the other inmates, to have her permanently locked in her cell. Fortunately — or perhaps unfortunately — her sentence was a short one. She was diseased; unquestionably there was mental aberration; but she went forth more dangerous to the community than a burning brand thrown at random. If, instead of the stereotyped term of punishment, the psychosis had been dealt with intelligently, if the girl had been discharged not at the end of twelve months but when she was healthy, physically and mentally, and ready to be a useful member of society, the prison would have been performing a function quite different from its present one.

Perhaps Number 10001 should have headed my list, as she was the oldest inhabitant — eighty-four years old; she had been in prison since she was fifty. For thirty-four years she had lived under the silence system of a rigidly disciplined penitentiary where daily, almost hourly punishments were being meted out for violations of this code, but she remained the most fluent conversationalist I have ever heard. I do not know whether this was because she was a woman, or because talking is a human trait not to be overcome in so short a time. Several years before my arrival she had been granted some species of respite and had gone to live with her son. She was not welcome, — probably illtreated, — and had come back to the prison as a place of refuge. The girls were always kind to her. Fruit and sugar — luxuries that might be received only on holidays or when one was allowed to have a visitor —

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were always shared with old Number 10001. She received many little gifts from the girls, but these were always given away immediately, because Number 10001 also enjoyed the rôle of benefactress. She thriftily gave where returns were surest. As a steady contributor, I was the recipient of many presents: bizarre bits of fancywork, much-thumbed religious mottoes in German; little cracker animals, her gift of gifts — it meant self-sacrifice to give one of these away.

Number 10001 had lived for eighty-four years on an interesting sphere in an interesting universe. Races of men had flourished and declined; men and women had lived, and loved, and hated, and worked, and played, and died. The world held African jungles and American skyscrapers, mountain peaks and Blackburnian warblers, clever books and beautiful music, molecules and theorems and political parties, fossils of dinosaurs, and etchings, and sonnets, and great bridges — but no intimation of their existence had ever come to the mind of Number 10001.

Of the store of knowledge of the human race, of any traces of intellectual curiosity, her mind was as barren as that of an animal. She was very pious, and would expatiate endlessly on religious themes. The old apple-trees in the prison yard had come from seed that she had planted when she was a newcomer there, and it was she who had planted the four peonies, the bleeding heart, the two rosebushes — the only attempts that had ever been made to introduce beauty into the sterile space.

That there is among delinquents a high percentage of those of inferior or subnormal intelligence is now a matter of almost universal information. It does not follow that delinquency and the inferior mind are synonymous. But realization of the generous percentage of those mentally handicapped among offenders ought to suggest that punishment is not 'the correct idear,' as Mr. Salteena puts it.

And this insight into one determining factor of crime suggests others — alcoholism, bad environment, poverty, bad heredity, lack of education, misfortune. But when one studies offenders at first hand, there comes a realization of the weakness of any general causation-theory, because instead of exact general classifications there will be Monica and Helene and Martha; and when one tries to fit them into these predetermined pigeonholes it can be done only by a manipulation of facts. One loses sight of Monica and her problems and finds only an automaton that does not bear much resemblance to the real and likable woman. And it is this real woman we must know, if we wish to help her.

*(In a succeeding paper, which is to appear in our May issue, Miss Thornton gives her constructive ideas on prison discipline.* — THE EDITOR)

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# SNOW-BOUND

BY JAMES NORMAN HALL

## I

I PAUSE at the outset of this narrative to consider a question of expediency. Should an itinerant journalist ever confess boredom? Should he not, rather, avoid mention of the valleys into which he is sometimes forced to descend? The matter may be considered from varying points of view, but on the whole perhaps it is best for him to be quite truthful; for if any follow him on his inconsequential wanderings they must be creatures of flesh and blood, with reactions very much like his own. And experience is never all of a piece. The most credulous of travelers-by-proxy know this, and they are not likely to follow one with trust, even in fancy, along continuous mountain-ranges of happy incident. 'What sort of country is this,' they will say, 'where one breathes always the heady air of purely joyous adventure? Either this man is fortunate above his fellows, or not wholly candid, or too considerate of our susceptibilities,' and they will leave him to explore for themselves, in the imagination, the more arid stretches of experience which he has pretended do not exist.

Having thus convinced myself, by special pleading, I am the more willing to confess that, on a winter afternoon, I was sitting in a chilly attic-room in a settlement on the coast of Iceland, playing solitaire — that last lethargic resource of the profoundly bored — and thinking, with some misgivings, of the future. It was about two o'clock, but dusk was already gathering. Wind, the implacable foe of man and beast in Iceland, was blowing at hurricane strength, driving before it the ashes of stars, the minute clinkers of burned-out constellations in the semblance of snow; and there was no promise of abatement. Of Iceland nothing remained save one small house in which I was entombed with its six inmates. Nothing remained of sun, moon, or stars, save that endlessly falling ashy débris, giving of itself all that remained of light.

I have been mildly bored, upon occasion, elsewhere in the world. It is the price one must pay for the gift of life, and how welcome, afterward, is the warmth and color and freshness of awakening interest! But never before had I found myself sinking into the unfathomable depths of ennui. The mere fact of playing solitaire convinced me that I was thus sinking. I threw aside the cards in disgust. How many games had I played? Twenty? Fifty? Impossible to say. I paced up and down the room, four steps to the window, four to the door. 'Well, this *is* a new experience!' I muttered despairingly, and immediately there came a gleam of hope. How is it possible, I thought, to have a quite new experience, even of boredom, and be bored with it? But the gloom settled again, like the wintry light fast thickening with yet more sombre shades of gray. Evidently this was the anomalous thing, the exception that proves the rule.



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My coming to this settlement had been the result of pure whim. One day, not long before, I was lying on a rug in a pleasant, book-lined room, with my map of Iceland, now pretty well worn with much handling, outspread before me. The recumbent position is an excellent one, not for painstaking study of a map, but for the idle, after-dinner survey. Chin in hands, elbows resting on the eastern and western littorals of one's island or continent, one may pass a very agreeable hour speculating as to what might be found there — or there — or there.

Wandering thus in fancy along a lonely stretch of coast, I came to a village, obscurely marked, at the end of one of the many fjords which indent the shores of Iceland. There were mountains on either side, rising almost perpendicularly from the level of the fjord. Midway was a river tumbling down the steep valley-wall, and a trail, doubtless, leading to the wind-swept table-lands beyond. So much information was to be gained beforehand; but what sort of experience one might have in that isolated settlement was not, of course, to be determined by dreaming on a hearthrug before a pleasant fire. So I decided to go there as soon as opportunity should offer.

I had not long to wait. Two weeks later I climbed down the side of a fishing schooner to the wharf at this village. The sky was overcast, after several days of fine weather, and the shoulders of the little group of Icelanders gathered there were powdered with the snow that was just beginning to fall. I had begun my usual halting, verbless inquiries for lodgings, when a short, grizzle-haired man came bustling up. He wore steel-rimmed spectacles that gave him a benevolent look, carried a cane, and was dressed in a mussed, rather greasy suit of blue serge. Doffing his hat, Danish style, with an exaggerated arm's-length gesture, 'Good day, sir!' he said, in English. 'Welcome to our city!'

I was a little surprised at the idiomatic expression, and it was not his only one. He spoke English fluently and, greatly relieved, I made known my wants. There was no hotel, he said, although they meant to have one some day. 'And a good one, too!' he added. 'I am going to build it myself.' He insisted upon showing me the site he had chosen for it, and hurried away in front along the border of the fjord until we came to a rusty boiler, lying in the open, half covered with snow.

'There!' he said. 'You see? I 've already made a beginning. This is for my hot-water system. I mean to have things very comfortable.'

Then he talked at length, earnestly and convincingly, of his plans. It was plain that he saw the hotel, in his mind's eye, already completed, with guests sitting around the radiators in the comfortably furnished office, and neatly dressed waitresses laying the tables for dinner. And there was only this rusty old boiler lying by the side of the road, just where it had been dumped. It looked as though it had been there for a long time. When I asked how long, he became gloomy of a sudden.

'Three years,' he said. 'No one comes to Iceland now — not since the war.'

He gazed at the ground, a picture of despondency. Then, brightening as quickly again, 'Do you suppose I could persuade some large business-concern in America to pay my expenses over there, so that I could tell them of the possibilities for trade in Iceland? We ought to do an enormous business with your country — enormous! Think of our fish — our salt cod and herring oil! Then there 's mutton and wool and Iceland ponies —'

Immediately he forgot the hotel

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project and talked as enthusiastically of commerce.

'Don't you agree with me? Don't you see the opportunities? You must know someone in New York I could go to? That might result in something big! I might stay there. I 'd like that — living in New York.'

At length I confessed that I was not in business and knew little of the possibilities for connections there.

'You 're not!' he exclaimed. 'Then why have you come to Iceland?'

'Oh, merely to travel,' I replied. 'I have always wanted to see this country.'

An expression very like anguish crossed his face. He gripped his hands tightly over the head of his cane, and punched with it through the snow, against the rusty boiler.

'You might have gone to Denmark,' he said. 'You might just as well have gone to England, or France, or Spain. And you came to Iceland! Think of it!'

He appeared to be talking to himself rather than to me, and at the moment I felt that I had been guilty of an all but criminal act.

'Why did you come?' he then asked, looking at me reproachfully. 'You 'll have to stay now, you know. I mean, you 'll have to stay here, in this village — perhaps all winter.'

'Oh, surely not!' I replied, a little anxiously.

'Oh yes, you will! That is, it 's very likely. You 've noticed how the fjord is freezing over? It may fill with ice so that no boats can come in, and even if it should n't there are no boats due for a long time. I think we 're going to have a heavy snowstorm. It looks that way; and if we do, you can't go over the mountains to the next settlement. It 's twenty-five miles away without a single house on the road. In winter the trail is often impassable for weeks.'

'Well,' I replied, 'I suppose I 'll have to make the best of it. But do you know of any place where I could stay? Is there any sort of boarding-house in the village?'

Immediately he was all enthusiasm and energy again.

'Of course! I keep one for the present, until my hotel is built. And here we are standing out in the snow! Come along! You 'll be very comfortable there. I 'll see to that!'

He seized my bag and rushed off as though there were not a moment to lose. The village looked very dreary in the gray light of late afternoon. The houses were perched on a narrow shelf of sloping ground around the end of the fjord, and directly behind them rose the mountains, barely visible through the falling snow. After a five minutes' walk we came to a bridge over a swift stream. My landlord stopped there to wait for me.

'You see how quiet it is here? Nobody in the street. Well, it 's like that all winter. Nothing to go out for. You won't see the sun, not even if the weather clears. From October till January it does n't rise above the mountains. It 's very gloomy. And I 've lived here all my life! Think of that!'

He hurried on again, pausing a moment later to add, 'But Iceland is a wonderful country. I would n't live anywhere else, not if you were to pay me for it. Wait till it clears up! You 'll see how beautiful it is then.'

## II

His house was even more precariously perched than the others, between the mountains and the fjord. I could barely discern the rocky wall towering over it. The door was very low. We had to stoop to enter. The living-room was so filled with odds and ends of furniture that one moved about with



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difficulty. A fine oak sideboard, hand-carved, stood by a wall. It must have been a relic saved from days of better fortune, and looked sadly out of place in the midst of broken-down kitchen chairs and rickety tables. Two boys of about eight and ten were wrestling on an old plush sofa. They were making a fearful racket. One had the other down and was pounding him for all he was worth. A girl, slightly older than either of them, was playing a phonograph. All three looked as though they slept in their clothing. Their father spoke sharply to the boys, but they paid no attention.

'They 're very wild,' he shouted above the din. 'I hope you don't mind a little noise? My wife 's dead — six years ago. I have an old woman to keep house, but she has n't much time for the children.'

Then, raising his voice even louder, he shouted, 'Gudrun!' The housekeeper — she might have been of any age between sixty and eighty — came to the door. Her scant white hair hung in a single braid, and her face was very red, as though perpetually immersed in steam. She made a little bone-stiff curtsey and, after a brief conversation with the landlord, went out again.

There were two rooms on the upper floor. Mine looked out to the mountain wall and was lighted by one small window. The roof sloped steeply on either side, so that one could stand erect only in the middle of the room. It was furnished with a washstand, a bed, a deal table, and a chair. The bed had lost two legs, and was supported at the lower end by a box; and when my landlord grasped the chair the back of it came off. There was no stove. 'But you will be surprised,' he said, encouragingly, 'how much heat comes up through the floor. It 's not nearly so cold here as you might think at first. The children sleep in that other room. Don't let them disturb you. If they make a racket, just you pound on the wall — ' He broke off abruptly. 'But you 'll be wanting a bath, of course! Wait! I 'll arrange that!'

I was not at all eager for a bath just then.

'Oh, please don't bother,' I said. 'To-morrow will do just as well.'

'No bother at all! Glad to do it. I know how Englishmen and you Americans are: first thing — a bath. I know! That 's all right! I 'll have it ready for you in no time!' and despite my further protestations he rushed downstairs. I heard the outer door slam, and again became conscious of the slightly subdued uproar from the living-room: the shouts of the boys, and the rasping of the phonograph playing endlessly the same record: —

> She 's as sweet as the heather,
> The bonnie purple heather,
> Mary, my Scotch bluebell.

The wind was gathering strength from moment to moment. It came from the north and swept without check down the full length of the fjord, making the little house tremble under its ceaseless impact. Fine snow drifted through invisible cracks and lay in little drifts, unmelted, on the floor. The gray light glimmered more faintly. Soon it was quite dark in the room. I sat on the bed waiting for my bath.

The landlord was gone for a long time, but at last I heard him running briskly up the stairs.

'It 's all ready!' he announced cheerily. 'You won't mind a little walk? I have no bathroom here, but there 's going to be a first-class one in my hotel. Fuel — that 's Iceland's problem.' He became gloomy again, and although I could not see his face I could imagine the swiftly changing expression. 'All of our coal is shipped in, mostly from England, and it 's very dear since the

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war. Think of the coal in America! Millions of tons! Cheap, too! What a chance for trade! You sell us your coal, and we sell you our fish. Well, some day — but come along! The water will be getting cold if we don't hurry.'

Had I been alone I should have been lost, at once, in that blizzard. It was pitch-dark and the snow came against our faces with blinding force. We struggled on through drifts and over wind-swept places where it was all we could do to keep our feet. Presently we stumbled against a door and my landlord said, 'Here we are!'

We had difficulty in opening the door, — the wind was blowing directly against it, — but at last succeeded, and I found myself in a large room built halfway under ground. Wooden vats were arranged around the walls, and one of these, my bathtub, was sending up clouds of steam, luminous in the lamplight. A fire was going under an upright boiler. On racks overhead sheepskins were drying.

'The skins are washed in these vats,' my landlord said. 'They are especially fine ones. See how white and soft the wool is! There ought to be a big market for them in America, don't you think? Now there 's an opportunity — Iceland sheepskin rugs! And we could furnish thousands.'

Taking a notebook from his pocket he sat down on a box and began making calculations. Meanwhile I prepared hastily for my bath. I had to crouch while undressing, to avoid contact with the Arctic Circle, and lost no time in getting into the water, which was waist-deep and of just the right temperature. My landlord looked up from his notebook, beaming at me through his spectacles.

'Is n't that fine?' he said. 'I was sure you 'd enjoy it. But you 'd better not stay in too long. You might catch cold. Now about these sheepskins — '

He shouted information about them all the way back to his house, his voice sounding very faint and thin above the howling of the wind. I made the briefest of replies as we stumbled through the snowdrifts, but my thoughts were not of sheepskins. Oh, it was a memorable bath, all round, and I doubt whether many landlords could be found anywhere in the world who would have put themselves to such a deal of trouble, on such a night, for a chance guest.

Supper was waiting for us. The children were already at the table, impatient to begin. Before bringing the food, the housekeeper tried to wash their faces with a damp rag. She succeeded with the youngest by taking him unaware, but the others fought her off.

During our absence another guest had come in, a strange little man, with a beard reaching almost to his waist. He was dressed in knickerbockers, a blue jersey, homespun Iceland stockings, and moccasins.

'He is very deaf,' my landlord said. 'He almost never speaks. I 'll not bother to introduce you.'

He ate very rapidly, with great zest, and was through with his supper even before the children, who wolfed their food like little savages. Before getting up from the table he drew back one sleeve of his jersey, and I noticed that his forearm had been shaved smooth. Holding it horizontally, he laid along it a train of snuff, which he drew in with one loud intake of breath. Then, gravely bidding us good-night, he left the house.

My landlord prepared to leave soon afterward.

'I have a great deal of work to do,' he said. 'You know, I never have a minute to loaf. Make yourself at home, and your room is ready whenever you want to go to bed.'

It was then only seven o'clock, too

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early to think of bed. I returned reluctantly to the living-room. The prospect of spending the evening with those three children was anything but a pleasant one. The little girl was not at all boisterous, but she had a horrible passion for the phonograph, and there were only three or four records. She played them over and over, regarding me, meanwhile, with a grave unabashed gaze, as though I were some interesting piece of inanimate mechanism. I confess with a certain amount of shame — being her elder by at least twenty years — that she made me feel very uncomfortable. I sought refuge from that steady scrutiny and was fortunate enough to find the fragment of a school geography lying on the floor. I hid behind that, making a pretense of reading, and gazed so long at one paragraph printed there that I still remember it, and shall remember it, doubtless, to the end of my days: —

'Seydisfjordur (885) er mesti baer á Austurlandi. Par er ágaet höfn, og barnaskolum er mesta hús i baenum.' (Seydisfjordur — population 885 — is the largest town in the East Country. There is a fine harbor, and the schoolhouse is the largest building in the town.)

It was a great relief to me when the old housekeeper came in from the kitchen. All three children crowded around her, begging for some favor, and finally, with an apologetic glance in my direction, she sat down before a cottage organ and began to play.

A miraculous change took place; the children quieted down at once, and joined in singing part-songs which seemed to have in them all the wild and lonely beauty of the land. Some of them may not have been Icelandic songs, and one, at least, I recognized — Ben Bolt. Later, having nothing else to do, I made a copy of the first stanza in my notebook: —

Ae manstu nú ekki hana Alis, Ben Bolt,
Hana Alis med lokkanna flód?
Ef brostir pú vid hún af glaedu pá grjet,
Ef grimdist pú titradi hun hljod.
Í kirkju-gardirum gamla, Ben Bolt,
Er grof úti horninu ein;
Par lögdu peir Alis til sídasta svefns,
Og settu henni forn-grytis stein.

The words sounded as odd as they look in print, but the children had clear sweet voices, and I have never heard that old song more effectively sung.

Meanwhile the fire in the stove had gone out, and the room grew increasingly chilly. The others did not appear to be aware of this, although their breath came forth in steam as they sang. Presently I went quietly out of the room and upstairs to bed. The singing lasted for another hour and, when the children retired, to my surprise they did so without making the least noise. I lay awake for a good while, listening to the booming of the wind, an awe-inspiring sound. Never before coming to that remote spot had I known what the north wind, fully aroused, could be. It seemed fluid ice, and swept over the ramparts of that desolate coast with scarcely an eddy, like water flowing over a pebble. From high overhead came a tumult of lonely voices. All the spirits of the North had returned from the Underworld and, crying and calling to each other, hurried along the upper surface of that mighty torrent of air as over a solid, viewless pavement.

## III

It was pitch-dark when I awoke. I lit the candle and looked at my watch — eight o'clock. The drifts of snow on the floor had greatly increased during the night. They sparkled in the candlelight, flashing from flawless crystals innumerable points of color, green and red and blue and white; but I was not

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tempted to get out of bed. I heard no sound of activity downstairs. The house was quiet except for the complaining of its timbers under the incessant buffeting of the wind.

The future looked as dark to me as the dawn of that winter day. Supposing I were to be marooned indefinitely in this village? What could I do to pass the time? I had brought nothing to read, and there was nothing in the house, in either English or Icelandic. The only thing approaching a book was the fragment of school geography. In such weather it would be impossible to find much diversion out of doors; and, even though the weather permitted, the village was so hemmed in between the mountains and the fjord that one would soon exhaust the possibilities for exploration. One could walk only along the narrow shelf of land where the houses were, and this was less than a mile long, and scarcely one hundred yards wide at any point. No, I should have to spend most of my time indoors.

In the midst of these gloomy reflections I observed, of a sudden, that the thumb of my right hand was twitching, with an erratic circular motion. Then the left one began; then both started twirling furiously, first in one direction, then in the other, then each in opposing circles — a supposedly difficult manœuvre for thumbs, but one which mine performed with the greatest ease. By that sign I knew that I was going to be bored, perhaps very seriously bored.

Summoning all my courage, I threw back the eider-down coverlet and sprang out of bed. I regretted that there was not one of those fine sheepskin rugs to stand on while dressing, but lacking it I dressed all the more rapidly. Outside, despite my warm clothing, — two suits of woolen underwear, two army shirts, heavy Iceland stockings, corduroy coat, riding-breeches, and sheepskin moccasins, — I was chilled through in a moment. Little could be seen from the doorway, except that the snow had drifted against the mountains in a long steep slope, half burying the near-by houses. The lower reaches of the fjord were frozen over to a distance of several hundred yards.

The housekeeper, who slept in the same room with the children, came downstairs as I reëntered the house. '*Godin dáginn!* (Good day!)' she said; '*pad er ágaet vedur* (it is fine weather).' I looked at her sharply, but her face was grave, composed. She had, seemingly, merely given utterance to what she regarded as a statement of fact. She was building a fire in the kitchen stove, and I watched with dismay her cautious method of putting on the fuel. She added just enough to bring the water in the kettle to a boil. But the coffee was excellent. I drank two large cups of it, very slowly, and having no further excuse for remaining in the kitchen, returned to the living-room.

My landlord came in about ten, greeting me pleasantly, in a preoccupied manner. He brought with him a sheaf of papers which he spread out on the table, and excusing himself — he was 'very busy just now' — began covering them with figures. I do not know what he was doing — making estimates, perhaps, for the new hotel; but whatever the work, I envied him his complete absorption in it. The housekeeper brought his coffee, but he paid no heed, and when at last he did drink it, it must have been quite cold. Then, seizing his hat, stick, and overcoat, and again urging me to make myself at home, he rushed out into the storm.

For lack of other occupation I too went out shortly afterward, and struggled through drifts, waist-deep, shoulder-deep, along the border of the fjord. I could see, dimly, the path my landlord had taken. It passed the

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tobacco shop, the general store, the baker's, the post office. Although it was getting on toward eleven o'clock, all these places were still closed, the entry-ways deeply buried in snow. The trail, growing fainter in the drifting snow, disappeared a short distance past the wharf. My landlord must have gone on to the hotel site, but I followed him no farther.

Boredom is a malady which gathers nourishment as easily as a dog gathers fleas. The mere enumeration of its causes, in any virulent case, would fill a volume the size of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy;* but the chief effect of it is that the sufferer loses his human conception of time. To him a moment is as a year, and a day as all eternity. It is sad to think that this godlike faculty for living in time as in a pure abstraction is granted us only when we do not want it, and snatched from us again in the first infinitesimal fraction of the first golden moment succeeding the period of boredom; but so it is.

During this day — if it may be called a day — the two boys wrestled on the plush sofa, on the floor, under the tables. Tiring of this, they rode down the staircase on a wagon furnished with spools for wheels. Tiring of this, they tormented a fine old sheep-dog who moved from place to place in the effort to avoid them. At last he took refuge beside my chair and they left him in peace. He too was profoundly bored, if one may judge by appearances. From time to time he would rise on his forelegs, look up at me in sympathetic understanding, yawn from the depths of his being, and go to sleep again.

The little girl did not play the phonograph all the time. She sat for hours, her hands lightly folded in her lap, gazing at vacancy. She seemed neither happy nor unhappy, neither bored nor amused. I marveled at her passionless immobility. One felt that she could have remained thus forever; that she was the perfect flower of forty generations of ancestors who had sat through an unbroken monotony of winter days and nights, possessing their souls in patience. The gift came to her, doubtless, from the mother's side of the family. The father was dynamic. It would be hard to find a spot on the habitable globe less congenial to a man of that temperament. I was appalled at thought of the countless thousands of times he had rushed up and down the narrow strip of land between the mountains and the fjord. But his was a sanguine nature, and I doubt whether he was ever unhappy for long. He was in and out of the house all that day, gloomy at one moment, blithe the next. He covered sheet after sheet of paper with figures. It was curious to watch his changing expression as he worked, but for the most part it was one of absorbed, eager interest. Small wonder, I thought, that his house contained no books. He had no need for them. He had his dreams. He invented his own romances from no better material than a rusty old boiler buried under the snow, or a sheepskin rug hanging up to dry in a turf-covered shanty.

## IV

My third day here was like the two preceding ones, except that I spent most of it in my room, playing solitaire. That night the wind died down, the weather moderated, and it began to rain. When I woke the following morning it was again very cold, but I knew, by the light in the room, that the sky was clear. My landlord knocked at the door while I was dressing.

'You 're late this morning,' he said. 'And such a morning! Glorious! You 'll see now how beautiful this place can be! But we 're frozen in. I can't get the door open.'

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We worked for half an hour clearing the snow away from the door. It was more than five feet deep there. My landlord climbed out first. He had a shovel in his hand. He dropped it, flung out his arms, and disappeared. 'Hello!' I said. 'Is it as deep as that?' But there was no reply. I climbed after him to see what had happened. The next moment I was on my back, gazing at a cloudless sky, and gliding at tremendous speed down a long slope of ice-encrusted snow.

I would not have believed that any ice — not even Iceland ice — could be so slippery. I thought I should never stop sliding and did n't stop, in fact, until far out on the fjord; and the best of the journey was that, in mid-course of it, boredom left me. I felt it go, suddenly, as though an immense weight on the spirit had volatilized, leaving me lighter than air. It was a glorious release.

My landlord was sitting on the ice, not far from where I came to a stop. Tears were running down his cheeks.

'Please forgive me!' he said. 'I can't help it. You don't know how funny you looked — ' and he broke down again.

'How are we to get back?' I asked, when he had somewhat regained composure.

'I 'll get the shovel. Maybe we can dig our way up.'

The shovel was farther out on the fjord. My landlord rose cautiously and was about to make his way toward it when we saw the old housekeeper — a mere speck at that distance — climbing out at the doorway.

'Look!' said he. 'If she is n't careful — '

Then she too threw up her arms and sat down. Two years have passed since I witnessed her descent, but at thought of it my diaphragm quivers spasmodically. She started in a sitting posture, but as the wind billowed out her skirts she reversed and came on head foremost.

Blessed, misnamed law of gravity! Before half an hour had passed, most of the village — old men and maidens, housewives and housekeepers, children, babies in and out of arms — slid down the mountainside to the fjord. There we all were, like ants at the bottom of a huge bowl: minute black figures trying to scramble up the slippery sides. 'My landlord is right,' I thought, as I watched the others. 'I 'll never be able to leave this place.' The mountains, rising so steeply overhead, looked immeasurably high, and over the ridges poured the light from the hidden sun.

Taking turns with the shovel, we dug footholds up the slope. The housekeeper followed warily. I looked back from time to time, to see how she was progressing, more than half hoping that she would lose her balance; but we all three regained the house without mishap.

'Well, what do you think of Iceland now?' said my landlord.

'It 's a beautiful country,' I replied. 'And what a place this would be for winter sports!'

He grew thoughtful at once.

'It would!' he said. 'I had n't thought of that! As good as Switzerland or Norway! It 's a wonderful idea! And in all these years it has never occurred to me!'

All that day he was more than usually preoccupied.

During the night there was a wet snowstorm which covered the glare of ice. The next morning it was again clear and moderately cold, and so the weather continued. Three days later a cargo-boat arrived unexpectedly from England, with coal. When I learned that she was to put in at Reykjavik, the capital, and that I could go with her that far if I chose, I did not know

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whether to be glad or sorry; for clear crisp weather has wonderful curative properties for body and spirit, and I was now convalescent from my attack of boredom. Nevertheless, remembering my long imprisonment, the two boys wrestling on the sofa, the phonograph with the three Harry Lauder records, the hours I had spent playing solitaire, it seemed best not to tempt Fate too far. So I packed my haversack and set out, with my landlord, for the wharf. A pathway had been dug that far, and the snow on either side was higher than our heads. The steamer had not been able to reach the wharf. It was tied up at the edge of the ice about two hundred yards away. A grimy pathway led to the beach, where the coal had been piled. The last of it was now ashore, and we were nearly ready to leave.

'I wish I were going with you,' said my landlord. 'I have n't been to Reykjavik in four years.'

'Why don't you come?' I urged. 'The change would do you good.'

He shook his head gloomily.

'No, no! Don't tempt me. It 's impossible. I have too much to do here.'

'Well, good-bye,' I said.

He was silent. The steamer gave a long blast of the whistle. He roused himself with an effort.

'About winter sports here,' he said. 'That is a really splendid idea! I 've been thinking of it a great deal. Do you suppose we could? But the weather is so changeable in Iceland. You know how it is — raining one day and snowing the next. I 'm afraid we have n't enough snow?'

He looked at me wistfully, as though in the hope of a confident denial of the statement. And indeed at the moment it seemed an absurd one, for the snow lay everywhere to a depth of three or four feet.

'I 'm not so sure,' I replied; but knowing the peculiar geographical conditions of Iceland I could not bring myself to give further encouragement.

The lines were being cast off. A bell jangled in the engine-room. It was necessary to go aboard at once. The steamer backed away and stood down the fjord.

My landlord waved his hand; then, turning his back to us, he tramped across the ice in the direction of the hotel site.

Very small and lonely he looked, beneath the encircling mountains. Of a sudden he disappeared behind a rise of snowy ground. Winter seemed to have engulfed him, finally and irrevocably, together with the rusty boiler — 'for my hot-water system.'

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# O THEOPHILUS

BY CAROLINE ATWATER MASON

## I

THE man had landed from a small steamer the evening before. He had been able to make his way through the customs without delay, and from the docks he had gone into the southern part of the city for lodging. There such quarters as he could have found must have been of the humblest.

It was late in May, and Sunday morning. The stranger walked alone through the streets, and as he went he directed earnest glances on either side, as if expecting something which thus far he had not found. The few persons who met him turned, some even stood, to look after him. Quite without consciousness of the fact, the man was a noteworthy figure in this part of the world. He wore a long woolen mantle of pale grayish hue and upon his head was a close cap of the same fabric. He walked with a long stride and with a light step, having sandals on his feet.

His search at last brought him, as the bells were ringing for nine o'clock, before a pillared façade. Here he halted, his eyes fixed on a cross above tall iron gates. These, at the moment, were thrown open. He bent to read a printed card attached to the gate. It bore a notice to the effect that, to enable the worshipers to secure time and freedom for recreation, the hour of service had been changed to half-past nine.

'Re-creation!' The stranger pronounced the word slowly and with evident satisfaction. 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day,' he murmured to himself; then, 'Sir, may I enter here?'

This question was asked of the attendant at the gate with grave courtesy.

'Sure, sure,' was the reply. 'That 's what we 're here for.'

'This is the house of God?'

'You 've said it. St. Cyprian's. All right. Walk in. You can take any seat you 're a mind to.'

With this the stranger was ushered into the church.

## II

The service over, the man was observed standing within the entrance of the church, aloof, but in no way ill at ease. In fact, the repose and distinction of his person and bearing were commented upon as singularly impressive.

A group of girls stood for a time outside the church door, glancing in furtively at the stranger. Question and conjecture were exchanged concerning the man's race and calling.

'How can you think for a minute,' urged one of the group, 'that that lordly being could be a Swami, or anything but a Greek? Take one glance at his profile. Clearly classic! There! Someone is going up to speak to him. We must stop staring.'

A gentleman, who had stopped at the book-table in the vestibule to make a purchase, did, at that moment, approach the stranger. Holding out his



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hand, he said with the American's careless cordiality, 'My name is Fellows. Connected with the Chamber of Commerce. I may have met you before, but the name —'

'I thank you. I am Theophilus, formerly of Rhodes.'

'Well, Mr. Theophilus, we are very glad to see you here this morning. Hope you enjoyed the service?'

The response was a detached smile of assent. Then the stranger, a sudden glow on his face, volunteered a remark in precise, formal English.

'I noticed with pleasure, as I entered here, that the hour of worship has been so arranged that each worshiper shall have time on the Lord's Day for his own re-creation.'

'"Re-creation"? Oh yes, yes. Exactly. Our American short cut is "recreation," but I know what you mean, sir — that card on the gate. Yes, it 's a new thing, and it takes wonderfully. First attend early service, then recreate the rest of the day. That 's the programme, and I am starting myself now on Number Two. My car is waiting just over there. Say — how would you like to motor with me down to the shore?'

Theophilus inclined his head with an air vaguely suggesting one who considers the granting, rather than the acceptance, of a favor. Mr. Fellows persisted along the line on which he had started, although why he chose it he hardly knew. There was something about the man —

## III

As they drove on through the city streets, Fellows, reflecting that more likely than not this foreigner might never have seen the inside of a car like his, if indeed of any car, felt a faint irritation at his impassive silence. This was broken, however, after they had passed several churches which many persons were entering.

'In very deed,' he exclaimed, 'this is the Christian city which I have traveled far to find!'

The smile with which these words were spoken suddenly awoke a cordial desire in Fellows to see the mayor Monday morning, and get him to give Theophilus the freedom of the city in return for the honor of his presence. He was certainly a personage, a man of no small consequence.

Lawns and woodland slope away from the verandah of the Merrymount Country Club. Beyond and below these the ocean surf that Sunday morning ran with music to break upon the sands. Theophilus, who supposed himself now to have arrived at the home of his new acquaintance, Mr. Fellows, watched the scene in still delight from the porch in which they sat together.

Few moments passed, however, before interruption came with the entrance upon the scene of a gentleman attired in a sporting-suit, carrying under his arm a long leather case. At his jovial challenge Fellows rose at once and conferred with him for a moment apart. Theophilus, meanwhile, looked with mild perplexity at the implements protruding from the leather case. Were these to have part in some unfamiliar ritual of that spiritual re-creation to which, as he supposed, the later hours of the Lord's Day were dedicated? Fellows, now ready to leave, paused to explain to Theophilus the necessity he was under of 'keeping a date' made a week ago. He would return soon after noon, and they would have luncheon together. Meanwhile, as he happened to have with him a new book by his pastor, the clergyman to whose sermon Theophilus had just listened, he would leave that for his diversion.

Left alone, Theophilus sat, the book unopened, his hands clasped upon his

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breast, his look withdrawn, touched by some inner radiance. Two hours passed. Looking up at the sound of a car, he recognized in the man now coming up the steps the pastor of the Church of St. Cyprian. The recognition was mutual.

'I am glad, my good friend, to find you here,' exclaimed the Parson. 'I saw you this morning at a distance, after service, with Mr. Fellows, but I lost the chance I wished to speak with you. This is an unexpected pleasure.'

'Your friend has received me graciously into his home, for a quiet hour,' returned Theophilus.

On near approach the Parson gained a sense of an unlooked-for quality in this stranger, something not connected with his costume or even with his person. Unconsciously he dropped his manner of patronizing kindliness. All attempt to explain the guest's mistake regarding the Club was given up as irrelevant, as they sat down together.

'I recognized by your garb, sir,' the Parson began anew, 'back there in the church, that you are a native of classic lands. I have been in Greece and Rome myself. You have won distinction — is it in philosophy? I am not quite sure.'

'My public connection was with one of the military orders,' the other replied; 'but it is true that I have given much time to philosophy. I follow it now no longer, however.'

'Oh yes,' said the Parson wearily, 'that is the way it goes with us all — over here anyway. What chance has a professional man in these days — even one in the ministry — for the pursuit of abstract thought? The one thing demanded of us now, over and beyond incessant social obligations, is to work up some new financial campaign. That is what brings me here to-day. I expected to find Mr. Fellows here. We must have his name to head the list of subscriptions to our new Mass Movement for Missions. It comes on to-night. Where is my friend, I wonder?'

Theophilus not replying, the Parson answered himself.

'Oh, to be sure! I might have known — golfing. He would be at this hour. I suppose he will return for luncheon?'

'I believe so. Are your Christian people then very poor, if I may ask?'

'Oh, my dear sir — poor? They are rich. No trouble on that point. The trouble is to persuade them to give their money for the spread of the Gospel, or any such object.'

'What, then, do your Christians with their money?'

'Oh, they give liberally enough along certain lines — educational, civic improvement, and such. But, in the main, money over here goes for luxury, extravagance, high living. I have touched up that point pretty plainly in one of the chapters of my new book. By the way, I see you have a copy of it there.'

Instead of passing the book to its author at once, Theophilus, with a word of apology, opened it himself.

'I was looking into this book at the moment you came,' he remarked, 'and if I may detain you a little I wish to inquire concerning this chapter, the title of which caught my eye — "Jesus, as Viewed by the Modern World."'

'Oh yes. That would, of course, appeal to you, coming as you do from Bible lands.'

The Parson, the book now in his own hand, glanced over the pages with animated interest.

'You have mentioned a difficulty in persuading the people of your church to give freely of their money for the spread of the Gospel,' volunteered Theophilus. 'Is not the cause made plain in your chapter there? If there is not a Gospel worthy of acceptation — ?'

'Sir, you have asked a crucial question. It is one which I should be glad to discuss with you, for it goes deep.'

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As the Parson was speaking, there broke in upon him the greetings of Mr. Fellows and his friends, just returned from the golf links, eager for luncheon. In short order then Theophilus found himself in a group of men at a circular table, one of many such, in a wide, low-ceiled room.

From that moment the non-American guest would have experienced only bewilderment, had he found it worth while to experience anything in connection with what went forward. While one course of elaborated food and drink followed another, and discussion of stocks and bonds waxed fast and furious, the man from 'Bible lands' ate rice, drank water, communed with his own thoughts, and was still.

## IV

As the little company began to break up, the Parson, slipping into a vacant chair beside Theophilus, said in an undertone, 'I want you to notice that gentleman sitting alone at the next table. Over there, see, near the chimney?'

'I observe him. He has the face of the man who thinks.'

'Right. That is a celebrated university professor, a man of science. You have probably heard of him — Professor Kirkwall, the astronomer? I have met him, but he would not remember me.'

While Theophilus was observing the man thus described, Mr. Fellows had risen, and the company now followed him to the verandah. But here, after a few moments, watches were consulted and a movement for departure among the golf-players became imminent.

'I fancy, sir, you don't go in for bridge,' said Mr. Fellows, addressing Theophilus. Anticipating his assent, he held out a parting hand. 'So I must leave you behind with the Parson,' he added. 'Sorry not to have you with us on my yacht, but we will hope for that when I see you again.'

When they were left alone the Parson breathed a long sigh, as of relief.

'Now we can go on from where we were,' he commented. 'You have not forgotten?'

'We were speaking of the Gospel.'

'Precisely. And of our modern conception of it.'

'You stress this word "modern." Do I understand that you hold that a new epoch demands a new conception of Christianity?'

'Just that. A new conception and a restatement. Ours is a scientific age, my friend, and we must admit that the present generation can hardly be expected to rest content with outworn mediæval formulæ. I need not tell you that many portions of the New Testament in recent years have been rejected of necessity, not being in accord with modern, scientific principles.'

'Still it is possible that these will be restored by greater knowledge,' commented Theophilus. 'We know in part. I recall this same process as having been followed with the canon of Plato,' he added. 'Only two of his Dialogues were left unchallenged.'

'Of course. I must have heard of that fact. Very interesting. Very much in point.'

'Only, in the case of Plato, it became necessary later to reverse these decisions,' Theophilus proceeded quietly. 'But I wish to inquire concerning the creeds, in particular the Roman symbol. That is based upon the New Testament documents, I believe. It was pronounced by the congregation, led by yourself, this morning.'

'Perfectly true' — with a gesture as of appeal. 'There 's the rub. These ancient formulæ are a sticking-point. I suppose it is natural for the unlearned to accept them still as truth, unchanged

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and unchangeable. We, who have the advantage of historical training, understand that these utterances simply mark a phase in the development of the religious consciousness. Thus they are merely of passing value.'

'But they are retained?'

'Yes, thus far' — and the Parson's knitted brow indicated disquietude. 'Of course we have moved on through successive interpretations of them, and successive reconciliations. But there is restlessness, especially among our younger clergy. It cannot be denied that there is restlessness.'

'How do you meet it, if I may ask?'

'Well, sir, we are meeting this with a strong movement toward the cultivation of mysticism, and we are somewhat encouraged by the response to our efforts. There is a very interesting revival of the study of Plotinus, of which you would be glad to hear — of Neo-Platonism in general.'

Theophilus was silent.

The Parson again took the initiative.

'The fact is that the Church with us, at the moment, is in a state of transition. And there is nothing harder to control than transition; nothing harder either to define or to describe. Nevertheless we are moving on.'

'But moving in what direction?' inquired Theophilus with urgency.

'We are moving, sir, toward the evolution of a broad, modernized, comprehensive religion, in which all men of all cults and creeds can meet on common ground.' Then, as if by an afterthought, the Parson added: 'For mankind, as you know, is incurably religious.'

Theophilus assented with sober civility, as if the phrase were more familiar than reassuring.

'What then will you do with Jesus, called Christ?' he asked.

'The old, old question,' murmured the Parson, smiling uneasily. 'There is thus far among us — except in very advanced circles — still held to be ground for believing that a certain historical basis for the person and life of Jesus exists in each one of the Gospels. Even the Fourth. That is my own opinion.'

'Would you then kindly give me, in few words, your conclusion in the matter?' asked Theophilus. His usual mildness of expression had changed. His aspect was solemn, even stern.

'It is all there in my book,' returned the other. 'I hardly need say that such parts of Scripture as involve the supernatural are incompatible with the Modern Gospel. We hold that, around this nucleus of the historic Christ, of which I just spoke, a myth of some suffering, dying, and risen Redeemer-God was woven at a very early date. The disciples seem to have "caught on," so to speak, to the philosophical mysticism of the Gentile world. In this way they expanded their personal devotion to the Man, Christ Jesus, into the Christian cult, which has come down to us. In reality Jesus was born as we are born; died, and was buried as we are. You know — or, perhaps, you do not know — Matthew Arnold's famous lines, "And on his grave with shining eyes —" '

'But this is not "modern"! This is no new thing!' Theophilus broke in upon the Pastor's poetry with passionate emphasis of finality. 'It is to me as if I hear not you, sir, speaking, but the voice of Cerinthus.'

'Really? I do not know how that may be. I have not attempted to be exhaustive, but it is — '

'It is of the first century — the old, old gainsaying. It is Gnosticism.'

A shadow fell across the open book as these words were spoken, and a voice, a vigorous, even imperious voice, broke in with the exclamation, —

'Not Gnosticism, but Agnosticism, if you will permit the interruption!'

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## V

The speaker was Kirkwall, the 'man of science.' The others rose at a motion of his hand.

'You will see if you look around you,' he more gently admonished, 'that this clubhouse verandah is no place for religious discussion.'

Unnoticed before by the Parson and Theophilus, the verandah around them was foamed over now by a crowd of women and girls, many men in their train. Smoking, drinking, and merry-making surrounded their small and sober island.

Ready without delay to follow Kirkwall, the men soon found themselves in a secluded rocky nook under tall pine trees. Without introduction or apology, Kirkwall now repeated the word with which he had first entered the lists.

'Agnosticism! That is what it really comes to in the last analysis. I have been sitting for a few minutes within hearing of your conversation, as you will grant I had the right to do, since it was carried on in public. I have listened with interest to your summary of scientific scholarship, my dear sir.'

This remark was addressed, with a smile of engaging frankness, to the Parson.

'Yes,' he went on, 'I have heard before that John and Peter and the other Apostles were miraculously transformed from unlettered fishermen into accomplished and learned charlatans, as soon as their Master was out of the way, and set to work with one accord to construct a new philosophical cult.'

'They had also, perhaps, a craving for martyrdom,' commented Theophilus meditatively.

'So it would appear,' assented Kirkwall. 'I am familiar with the theory that, in framing their new cult, the Apostles borrowed Immortality and the Logos from the Greeks, and I don't know what from Isis-worship, Persian Mithraism, and so forth. My dear sirs, all these hypotheses, if you will pardon my frankness, are "profane and vain babblings." They are "oppositions of a science falsely so called"!'

'"Which some professing have erred."' Theophilus completed the quotation.

'It really seems,' Kirkwall went on, 'as if the futility of this Anticredibility Crusade would be obvious to any man who troubles himself to look back, say, to Paulus. He published his Life of Christ in 1828, explaining miracles on a naturalistic basis. Then Strauss came along and discovered the miracles to be myths. But Baur and his Tübingen school, in the middle of the century, decided that they were not myths, but legends. They had things their own way for a little, but, you see, it takes time for legends to grow and assume form. Consequently Baur was driven to push the date of Construction of the Synoptic Gospels on into the second century. But this castle in the air was dissolved in short order. It happened not to fit the facts. So now Bousset comes forward with his romancing about the "sources" being the pagan mysteries. Who knows which way rationalism will turn next?'

'But, my dear Professor,' burst in the Parson, white from the shock of his amazement, 'surely you, as a man of science yourself, acknowledge that religion must have a scientifically correct basis!'

'As a man of science I have learned to perceive that science and religion can never rest on the same basis. There can be, as Steinmetz said, no scientific foundation of religion. Faith remains, and must remain forever, the foundation of religion, while sense, and sense perceptions, constitute science. Keep the two apart.'

'But really, Professor Kirkwall,'

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urged the Parson, 'you are the last man one could associate with Obscurantism! You would not have theologians claim to believe that which cannot possibly have come to pass!'

'I would have theologians call a halt on their vain efforts to bring the eternal verities "down to date." It is high time — "date" being always in flux, never crystallizing. But to what particular feature of the Christian system do you refer as impossible?'

'Well, the actual resurrection of Jesus, for one thing, as given by the Evangelists,' replied the Parson.

'But it must be you read your famous critic, Schmiedel? You cannot have overlooked his dictum that it is logically inevitable that if, at any time, it should be recognized that the resurrection of Jesus never happened, Christianity would be over and done with? Are you ready to meet the logic of the situation?'

'Schmiedel sometimes goes too far for me,' returned the Parson nervously. 'I am myself quite conservative!'

'Well, frankly,' exclaimed Kirkwall, 'could anything be more deplorable than the mess the Liberal critics have thus far made with the threadbare fragments of the New Testament out of which, for a century and a half, they have been trying to piece together their "Modern Gospel"? The shadow of Jesus which issues from their alembic — how confused it is, how wavering! That of a man half dreamer, half dissembler. Compare Luke's Gospel — written, you know, about the year 70 — with what these latter-day Biblical chemists make of it. Even Renan admitted that this Evangel is "the most beautiful book in the world."'

'I have it with me always, borne here on my bosom.' Theophilus spoke very low, almost as if he preferred that his words should not be heard. Perhaps they were not. For the Parson had suddenly awakened to the flight of time, had remembered an appointment overdue, and now, with hasty farewells, hurried away.

## VI

Some faint echo of his companion's words was manifest when Kirkwall spoke, they two being now left alone.

'Do you know,' he said, 'that if you actually carried with you at this moment the very text of Luke's Gospel, as it came from his hand, it would make no difference with men like our friend the Parson?'

Theophilus looked with keen inquiry into the other's face.

'No difference whatever, in the end,' repeated Kirkwall. 'For, you see, the first axiom in the system of Naturalism now applied to the Bible is that whatever purports to be supernatural must be denied. This is called scientific. Were such a manuscript discovered, the critics would betake themselves in hot haste to their laboratories, to their microscopes and various textual testings. They would in due time announce that, even if this version were all that was claimed for it, it only confirmed their "scientific" positions.'

'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,' mused Theophilus. Then, 'You are yourself, my friend, a Christian, I think.'

'I have not that honor,' Kirkwall replied simply. 'But I perceive, sir, that you are a Christian scholar of a different stamp from those now in the ascendant here. You have not interested yourself, perhaps, in their various substitutes for Christianity?'

'I am unversed in your modern learning,' was the response.

'You have escaped much! One formulary defines God as "the unborn life of the world that is to be." Then we have Synthetic Religion. Quite

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recently appears the system of our psychopathologists. Their pitiful pedantries pass nimbly now from lip to lip. According to them religion is the "fictitious interpretation of existence in terms of the interests of the ego"; religious experience is reduced to "a defense mechanism." The desire for reconciliation with God — "the Father-Image" — is a phase of "the Œdipus complex." The aim of religious behavior is to "release the personality-picture from the inferiority complex." The sacrifice of Christ is a symbol of the "liberation of the unconscious." The highest reach possible for "religion" is that man "must so master his impulses that he may reassemble his personality-picture in such fashion as to make it an effective instrument of orientation." Do you grasp it?'

'I grasp the fact that such as these hold that in man himself man must henceforth seek his religion. The secret of God is not with them.'

Then, below his breath, Theophilus repeated: —

'*In him was life.*

'*And the life was the light of men.*

'*And the light shineth in darkness.*

'*And the darkness comprehended it not.*'

Kirkwall spoke again after a little.

'Christianity alone,' he said slowly, 'can touch the highest in us, and the deepest. It transcends all other religious conceptions, whether on the mystical side or on the side of behavior. It was a white fire of revelation, struck out in the conjunction of the Hebraic and the Hellenic genius. And it persisted for a few centuries. Then Rome took the divine fire, set her Vestal Virgins on to it, paganized and standardized it. Later the Reformation came on and dogmatized it.'

'Rather, as I should apprehend it, the Reformation brought it back to its initial glow,' said Theophilus.

'Perhaps. But something of the primal passion was lacking. Even so, when all that men could do was done, the primitive Christian religion stands supreme in our history. And why not? Here, first of all, was vitality — life. A life lived; death and the bondage of sin conquered; the power of an endless life bestowed. Life, which brought into action the supreme human energy — love. Mystery also was here — the indispensable thing which our critics and psychologists are working hard now to abolish, the element which divides religion from ethics. Then, further, we shall agree that primitive Christianity offered mankind aspiration, and hope, with the sternest sacrifices and sanctions, while it upheld a lofty and fastidious morality. It was simple enough for the child, yet with a mysticism exalted enough for angels.'

'More than all, it was true. What lacks it yet?' queried Theophilus.

'Make it work to-day, if you can! I see no chance for it.'

'It has worked against heresy and schism, against prison bonds, mockings, and scourgings, against torture and death.'

'Yes,' rejoined Kirkwall. 'Over those last it could triumph, for those forces were without. Christianity now is beset from within.'

'Heresy and schism have always worked from within. The Church will survive the present revival of Gnosticism as it survived the same thing in the first centuries.'

'But there is a yet deadlier thing working within. Can the Church survive prosperity?'

'How do you mean?'

'I mean Ease. I mean the tyranny of the Material, the Practical, the Obvious — briefly, the genius of our civilization. You see, my dear sir, with us the Church has grown cautious. It shrinks from whatever fails to conform to the

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"spirit of the age," which is materialistic, mechanistic, sterile of ideals. Hence, the outcry for a Modern Gospel. The Church is philanthropic, to be sure, but our philanthropy, in the main, is bent on making other people comfortable that they may not, by their discomforts, turn and rend our comfortable sense of having done what was expected of us. Our unspoken litany is, Lord, make us prosperous! Lord, make us popular! Lord, preserve us from fanaticism! Can the religion which Christ brought survive in such an atmosphere?'

'It survived in the atmosphere of the Roman Empire. And it outlived its collapse.'

'Men were willing then to die for the Faith.'

'There are many deaths a man may die. Men may be asked again to die for the Faith.'

Kirkwall shook his head.

'Hardly, I think. There was a time when I dared to call myself a Christian, but that was years ago. Images and passages from the Scripture come to my memory still, as an ode of Wordsworth or a sonnet of Milton will, now and again. They are to me a pensive reflection of a past rapture, an emotion for which there is no corresponding activity. Neither the one nor the other has power to stir me now. My mind dwells elsewhere. I belong, like the rest, to the world of the obvious, the material.'

'You are an astronomer, I believe?' asked Theophilus.

'Yes, the stars are my job. And they are too much for me. I confess it. My faith is not strong enough to stand the universe since it has grown so great.'

'Because creation is found greater than men once knew, it cannot have a creator?' questioned Theophilus. 'So said the Psalmist also. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, *what is man?*" But in the same breath: thou hast made him; thou art mindful of him; thou hast visited him; thou hast crowned him.'

'Oh, but when you have to realize the boundless reach in time and space of the sidereal universe! When you are forced to see human life as a mere "organic scum" forming for a moment upon the fortuitous fragment of some nameless star — that star itself but a forgotten speck in space — faith shrivels! The sense of personality becomes dim.'

'Yes, as you said a little while ago, it is not in the realm of man's sense perceptions that faith has its roots,' replied Theophilus. 'It is in the power of the Eternal, Immortal, Invisible. To the humble in heart and mind grace is given to endure — even the universe — as seeing the Invisible.'

They were silent for a time. Drawing a long breath, Kirkwall spoke at last with a wry smile.

'Humility, in spite of the organic-scum theory, has never been my strong point. But, in some mysterious fashion, in your presence, sir, my defenses crumble. I have told you that I have found the universe too hard for me, and that I have found the present-day practice of Christianity too easy for me. I am thinking. Perhaps I can leave the universe to God. He knows more about it than I do. You said just now that there are many deaths a man may die. If a time were to come when Christianity must perish unless men were found willing to die for it, I might find it not too easy to be a Christian. And surely — not too hard.'

'That time is at hand.'

## VII

Many days had passed. Many deeps had been sounded, and many shallows.



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It was night. The moon, rising over a small and lonely island in the Ægean Sea, served only, by its light, to cast into deeper shadow the western shore beneath the steep foreland.

The form of a man moved from the verge of the shining tideless sea to the darkness below the cliff — a man with head lifted, as if he were listening. The figure became motionless as a voice within the shadow was heard. It called his name.

'O Theophilus!'

This voice was more tender than earthly voices, but it was of a human tenderness. The man's face, though turned toward the shadows, became irradiated. Response came on a note of exaltation.

'Now is my heaviness turned to rejoicing,' he cried out. 'I salute thee, Lucanus, my master and fellow servant in the kingdom and patience of our Lord.'

Again the voice.

'Thy mission is fulfilled? Thou hast acquainted thyself with the Church of God in the Western world?'

'Yes, I have accomplished that for which I was sent. I am ready now to depart, and to return with thee to the abode of the blessed dead.'

'Hast thou found faith?'

'Many men I have found of holy and humble heart; many who have held fast His name and have not denied His word.'

'Speak, most noble Theophilus, I beg thee, of the things which thou hast seen and heard in the churches.'

'There is faith, but there is withal much unbelief. The cross of our Lord, and the power of His resurrection, and the testimony of His word are set at naught in the counsels of many.'

'But these are no longer called by His name?'

'They have called themselves by His name until now.'

'To such as these it is not given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. Their counsel and their work shall be but for a moment. But the word of our God shall stand forever.'

'Even so. But the times are waxing evil. It may fall out that, ere the Church recover faith, the present order of things shall pass.'

'Fear nothing. The kingdoms of this world, in fullness of time, shall become the kingdoms of our God, according to the eternal purpose which He hath purposed.'

'We can await His time. True and faithful is the word of His grace. Thine own Evangel, my Lucanus, has abounded to my consolation in the far country. Even now I have returned it to its secret place.'

'But hast thou not made it manifest among those men of faith? Or among such as are of little faith?'

'Nay, Brother, the time was not yet come. For with those of faith the word is already hid in their hearts; and the others would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'

'So be it. Let us go hence.'

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# MILKING THE PUBLIC

## BY A LITTLE PROFITEER

I HAVE been in business for myself just four months. Only four months since I left my last job, never, I hope, to work again for another's gain. And already I note a changing of my sympathies. At one time I aspired to the profession of farming and took a four years' agricultural course at a state university to that end. I pitied the farmer in his struggle against a market controlled by others. But now I am a business man — a milk-plant owner. I deal with farmers daily — and all too soon I feel a dawning contempt for that body of men which sells me milk at so low a figure.

I sat for a year in an editor's chair on a metropolitan newspaper. I aimed my shots at privileged business and learned that to loose one's pen was to lose one's job. Enormous profits meant robbery to me; and now a very small business privately owned has doubled my income with less effort than I have ever put forth before. My profits are unreasonably great. I should soon be rich and suffer the consequences thereof, were it not for the modesty of my ambitions when contemplating my own business from the point of view of a poorly paid employee. What I sought four months ago was not wealth, but the independence that comes from being one's own boss. I settled in a town of 2500 souls, where my market has very definite limits. Yet all the temptations that can come to the big business-man have come to me on a smaller scale. Before I am entirely corrupted I wish to record the feelings of an employee as he goes into business on his own.

My income is small compared with that of most business-owners. To me, however, after keeping body and soul together, clothing and feeding wife and children, on $6 a day, an income of $12 to $15 a day seems little short of luxury. And knowing how niggardly is the price I pay the farmers for their milk, and how great is my share of the selling-price of my products, I feel like a robber.

Especially is this true when I don't mean to do it. To buy a farmer's milk at 16 cents per gallon, pasteurize, bottle, and hand it over to my fellow townsmen at three times that figure looks like robbing both the farmer and the consumer. At least, so it looked to me during the first month of business. At that time I thought of giving the producer a bonus and the consumer a rebate. But now my skin is a shade tougher and six months hence I fear that I shall regret having made even these admissions. But that is the very reason I make them. If business success means the dulling of one's conscience, the hardening of one's heart, I want to know, at least, and to be able to prove to myself that I was n't always what I bid fair to become.

I said I did n't mean to extort such profits. I had never been on the 'inside' of business before. I knew that the incomes of large corporation heads were great. I believed the oft-repeated statement that in big business there are many economies. I believed that the reason so many small businesses fail was to be found in the smallness of their output with correspondingly high



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'overhead.' So when I decided to sell my output of milk, butter, ice cream, and cheese at the prices set by my city competitors I believed I was inviting the living-wage, plus independence. Instead, I am in luxury. I can now see how business can grow into legalized robbery. Yet in this hour of realization I find myself agreeing with my satisfied customers that to handle milk in so modern a fashion is worth every cent I am charging.

I spent seventeen years in school 'being educated to serve society' (as my father used to put it). And my services never netted me more than $50 per week. Whether I taught youth, wrote editorials for the masses, made ice cream for picnics, or clerked in a bank, my best effort for eight to nine hours a day netted me no more than $50 per week. But when I establish my own business, borrowing the capital and working half as hard as before, I 'serve society' to the tune of $12 to $15 a day. And were I situated in a city of 150,000 instead of a town of 2500, I might conceivably increase that income five to ten times. And so I ask myself: with such temptations to wealth, what manner of man shall I be after six months, a year, or six years of business success?

I have n't started to save. Instead, we have a new car. We now have a laundress and a cleaning woman. Our child is in a private school. My wife and I are calmly discussing home sites. How long will $12 to $15 per day seem robbery? How long shall I cherish the ambition to lead the struggling farmers out of the clutches of big business into coöperative enterprise? What I get in my little town is mine just so long as the farmers fail to coöperate. The big milk-distributors in near-by cities successfully control the price of milk because the farmers let them. Milk stays at 16 cents per gallon at the plant, 13 cents at the farm, and remains at 44 to 48 cents per gallon at the consumer's doorstep.

If my small plant can keep as profits half of this difference between 16 and 48 cents on each of the 100 gallons handled, what must be the profits of the city distributors? Unless it is a mistake that the larger the output the greater the economy of production, their profits should be great. For the following analysis of my own costs will show what is possible in a very small plant.

I purchase 100 gallons of milk a day at the price set by the city distributors thirty miles from my door — 16 cents. I pasteurize, bottle, and distribute 80 gallons of this to 225 private homes at 12 cents a quart and to 6 restaurants at 34 cents a gallon. The other 20 are separated into cream and skim milk. I sell the cream at 12 cents a half-pint. Surplus cream is made into ice cream, and all the skim milk goes into cottage cheese.

It costs me about $12 a day to run the plant. This includes electric power, coal for the steam, work of two truck-drivers, upkeep of the two small trucks, upkeep of the machinery, bottle caps, replacement of broken and lost bottles, miscellaneous supplies such as ice-cream salt and straining cloths, interest and depreciation on an investment of $3500.

My daily milk balance-sheet for August read about as follows: —

| | |
|---|---|
| *Receipts* | |
| 60 gallons milk sold retail at 48c. . . . | $28.80 |
| 20 gallons milk sold wholesale at 34c. | 6.80 |
| 2 gallons coffee cream at $1.92. . . . . | 3.84 |
| 5 gallons ice cream at $1.00. . . . . | 5.00 |
| | $44.44 |
| *Expenditures* | |
| 100 gallons milk at 16 cents. . . . . | $16.00 |
| Plant overhead per day. . . . . | 12.00 |
| | $28.00 |
| Profit | $16.44 |

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The plant also makes a small quantity of butter and handles eggs, in neither of which is there much profit.

With the cost so low one might ask why the law of supply and demand does not reduce the price to the consumer. I don't have to reduce my price because I am the only distributor of pasteurized milk in a town where there is a large demand for safe milk. I have competitors, farmers, who undersell me two cents a quart. But why the large city distributors do not reduce the price of their milk I do not know.

It is possible that they agree on a price. Or it may be that the costs of doing business are greater per gallon the larger the output — which I do not believe. My own conclusion is that the profits which seem so large to me — I cannot forget the living-wage — are in reality only average. The per cent of gain in other branches of American business must be equally great and greater. The American business-man expects that much profit in one business or he can and will turn to another.

But I am still a radical. I attend meetings of the League of Youth, boost the progressives, and admire the socialists. For how long, I ask. My best friend in this little village is a poor artist, a radical socialist. We hobnobbed together as two students, partook freely from the same cup until — until the day I traded in my battered touring-car, relic of bygone days as the poor employee, for a shining new car.

My friend is desperately poor. He buys milk from my dairy. He has a better head than I have, more brains. He has a better education and is a better Christian. I am no longer sitting at his fireside. Instead, we are going to the near-by cities to the opera and carrying with us friends who too are fortunate enough to afford the tickets. We have ten friends where before we had one.

If a half-day's labor in a town of 2500 will bring me $12 to $15 a day, what will a whole day's work in a larger city do? In terms of dollars and cents it might make me rich. But shall I try it? After I have pushed this little business of mine to its limits, I shall still be far from a rich man, though I shall have a respectable income. Shall I be satisfied? Unless I differ from the average successful business-man in America — and I fear I do not — I shan't. I shall move to the city. I shall play the game among the busy business-men, turning my back upon my conscience until I am old, until my children have grown into what I don't at present want them to be — successful business-men.

No. I shall be content. Here I shall remain. I shall be satisfied in a small business. I shall discard the new car and regain my friend if —

'Come, daddy, let 's go for a ride.'

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# 'TRUTH IS STRANGER—'

BY D. E. ADAMS

'You 'll have to shift, Andrew.' Mrs. Stewart leaned her pudgy weight forward to give a slight additional impulse to the laboring sedan.

'The top's nowhere in sight,' muttered her spouse, cautiously jamming down his left foot and shifting in his seat as the car settled into a slow, noisy grind. 'It 'll take a heap o' gas to go up in low. See what that guideboard says.' Mrs. Stewart craned her neck at the tipsy board stuck in the gravel bank at her right.

'Avalon fourteen miles.'

The little man at the wheel growled but said nothing. The road stretched straight ahead — up, up, up. On the right a steep bank of rocks and gravel sloped sharply down from the mountainside clear to the wheel-track. On the left an irregular line of rough-hewn boulders marked the limit beyond which the narrow roadway dropped off a thousand feet into space. So narrow was the track that now and again the hub-caps grated warningly against the rocky barrier, as the car lurched upward over rough-dug waterbars. Across the cañon, a mile or more, the dark forested slopes rose grim and forbidding. Clouds hung low above, from which spurts of moisture now and then could be seen sheeting down into the cañon. The afternoon sun had already sunk below the jutting sky-line, and shadows lurked in the rocky walls to which the road clung with what seemed a precarious grasp.

'I wish we were out of this,' said Mrs. Stewart, almost in a whisper. 'Whatever made you try it?' She shivered as a gust of wind silvered the wind shield with a sudden film of moisture.

Andy did not take his eyes from the road. He only shifted again in his seat to relieve his aching leg without relaxing his firm pressure on the pedal that held the flivver in low. He was a gray little man, with little stringy gray side-whiskers, which failed utterly to hide a little gray receding chin.

'I really don't know, Maria. I wish myself we had n't come. Everybody told us this was a wonderful trip, but I shall be thankful if we ever get out of here. I wish I was right back behind the counter this minute, weighing sugar.'

'I don't wish that, Andy.' Maria spoke firmly, although she glanced apprehensively about as she did so. 'You have n't had a vacation in ten years, and you need one. But I wish we had n't come up here.' Andy gave a quick side-glance to the left.

'This cañon is supposed to be one of the beauty spots of the country, but we 're altogether too near the edge to suit me.' He fixed his eyes, owl-like behind huge spectacles, upon the road again. The clouds seemed to drop lower as they ascended, and a fine mist filled the air. 'Sit steady; there 's a sharp curve ahead, and I can't see well.'

The car ground slowly around the curve. Suddenly out of the thickening mist loomed another car headed downward. Maria screamed and grabbed Andy's arm. With a quick lunge, Andy



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pushed her aside and reached for the emergency. As the sedan ground to a stop, he perceived, however, that the other car was not moving, and apparently not occupied, though it filled the exact middle of the road and blocked all further progress.

'What do you suppose —' he began mildly, but his sentence was not finished.

A masked figure stepped suddenly forward from behind a jutting rock on the curve just ahead of the sedan.

'Stick 'em up!' Falteringly Andy raised his arms as high as the top of the sedan would allow. Maria followed his example, breathing hard, her hat very much awry, her little round fat face a picture of fear and misery. But the man with the gun was not looking at pictures. Partly lowering his automatic, as if he saw that it was no longer needed, he spoke over his shoulder.

'Come on, Bill, jack 'em up.' Another figure emerged from behind the rock. In the moment of his approach Andy noticed that the masks of both were greasy bandannas with irregular slits for eyeholes. The second man was short and thickset and limped slightly as he came forward to the side of the sedan.

'Get out,' he growled.

'I — I — c-can't take my foot off the brake — the emergency does n't hold.'

'They never do,' replied the robber shortly. 'Keep your hands up.' He jerked the door open on Andy's side, seized the wheel, and twisted it sharply to the right. The sedan lurched backward into the gravel. 'Now come out of it, both of you.'

'But the car's headed over the bank,' protested Andy feebly.

'All the easier to push it over when we get through with you.'

Painfully Andy straightened his stiff leg and climbed down, his hands wavering above his head. Maria followed him, scrooging by the wheel as best she could. The thickset man pointed to the outer edge of the road.

'Get away from the car.' Then he began to go through Andy's pockets, taking out everything that he found. Andy's worn fountain-pen came first. The robber glanced at it, and tossed it over his shoulder — into nothingness. He extracted a few bills from the worn wallet which came next; with the other hand he fished out Andy's Ingersoll, and that too went over the brink. Slowly the little Scotchman's ire rose, as he felt his lean ribs poked and pushed in search of plunder. His knees trembled. The sweat poured down his forehead and streaked his glasses. One by one his prized small possessions were tossed into the cañon.

'Nothin' doin',' growled his tormentor. 'There ain't five bucks on him.'

'Then you'll have to try the First National,' snapped the other, raising his gun. Andy's assailant turned suddenly and grabbed for Maria's skirt-hem, half kneeling as he did so.

Andy's knees stopped trembling. A cold fury seized him. His roving eye spotted a jagged rock about the size of a man's head, not twelve inches from his right foot, lying loose in the roadbed. They would, would they! He'd show them! He looked cautiously toward the man with the gun, who had turned and was looking out into the cañon. Andy feigned an expression of horror, looked straight up the road past the man with the gun, and cried out, 'Your car — look out!'

The gunman whirled. Andy became in that moment endowed with superhuman strength. A long step, and his right hand grasped the slack trouser-seat of the man reaching for his wife's ankle. A heave, and over the low barrier of rock the robber followed Andy's possessions. As the gunman

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swung back in vexation at Andy's ruse, his face collided violently with a jagged rock hurtling through the air. He dropped his gun, staggered backward, and before he could recover himself from the blow something landed like a catapult upon his chest. That was all he knew about it! In another moment Andy dragged his second victim to the edge of the roadway, and pitched him too into oblivion.

Maria, her mouth hanging open in dumfounded astonishment, stood looking at her mild-mannered little spouse.

'Why, Andy Stewart, what have you done? You 've killed those men!'

Andy looked at her. He was standing in the middle of the road. His glasses were gone. His hat was gone. A streak of blood stained his right hand.

'Yes, I hope so. I 'll teach them to throw away my things and insult my wife.'

Without another word he turned and strode up the road to the standing car. He turned the steering-wheel, reached in and released the brake; the car moved forward across the road to the rock barrier. Sweating and muttering, Andy pushed aside several of the smaller rocks which impeded its progress. Then he got behind and pushed. With a wild lurch, the car followed its owners over the brink. Andy replaced the stones, smoothed over the ruts with one foot, brushed the dirt from his shoe, and returned to his wife.

'I guess we 'll be going. Get in.'

Without a word Maria climbed into the sedan. Andy looked around upon the scene of combat. He recovered his hat and glasses, wiped his hands on a piece of waste, and tossed it carefully over the brink. He stood for a moment beside the car. A cold gust swirled up over the edge of the cañon. The sky grew dark. Stiffly he climbed in, and stepped on the starter. For twenty minutes the car ground slowly upward through the gathering gloom. Andy's hands began to shake. Sweat stood on his brow. His lips grew dry. He glanced at his wife. She sat hunched forward, peering through the darkness ahead, her face pale, her hat still awry.

'I — I — ' began Andy.

'What are you going to do, Andrew Stewart?' She turned toward this man whom she had known for years, half-fearfully, as if she were addressing a stranger.

'I don't know. It all seems like a dream. It was n't me that killed those men. It could n't have been.' The steering-wheel wobbled as he spoke, and the car lurched toward the dangerous side of the road.

'Be careful!' cried Maria sharply. 'I never saw you like that before. It 's all too terrible. Why did n't you just let them take what they wanted?'

'Because they intended to push our car over the edge when they got through, and probably we would have gone with it.'

Maria gasped. Her eyes widened.

'But what can we do about it?'

'Nothing much, I guess. I wish I was back at home filling kerosene cans. I s'pose I 'll have to stop at the next town and give myself up.'

'Don't you do anything of the sort.'

'It 'll be found out if I don't, and then where 'll we be?'

'You killed them in self-defense.'

The grade grew steeper. The rain fell faster and faster. The lights pierced only a few yards into the darkness. Then the car shot forward. The rain ceased, and a spatter of lights appeared away to the right.

'We must be up — those lights would be Avalon.' Andy let the boiling car into high, and relaxed his grip on the wheel as they rolled down a gentle slope. Twenty minutes later the mud-spattered sedan came to rest before the Hotel Avalon, a battered frame struc-

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ture, flung down slightly askew alongside the muddy street which represented the 'business section' of Avalon. At the clerk's desk Andy inquired for the sheriff. The clerk pointed a dirty finger toward the corner, where a rangy individual in flannel shirt and chaps sat tilted back against the wall, absorbed in a battered newspaper. Andy crossed the room and stood for a moment waiting the sheriff's pleasure. The dim light from a smoky oil lamp in a wall-bracket cast flickering shadows across the floor behind him.

'Wal, mister, what can I do for you?'

Andy drew up a chair and leaned forward.

'I've come to give myself up. I've just killed two men.'

'What th' — You killed two men? You don't look it.'

'Well, I — I — did. They held me up down on the cañon road.'

'Let's have your gun.'

'I have n't any.'

Disbelief grew on the sheriff's face. Stammeringly Andy told his story.

'Jim,' called the sheriff across the room, 'anybody take the cañon trail since noon?'

'Not a soul,' answered the clerk laconically, looking up from the *Police Gazette*, which lay on the desk.

The sheriff turned back to Andy.

'You hear what he says. You must be dreamin'. You could n't 'a' knocked out two men with guns barehanded. You ain't big enough.'

'It does seem like a dream,' admitted Andy, 'but it happened. I would n't be giving myself up if it had n't.'

The sheriff stiffened up and looked at him coldly.

'What are you — tryin' to get some free advertisin'?'

'No, I'm not,' Andy barked angrily, rising from his chair. 'You need n't believe me if you don't want to. I tell you that I killed two men and threw them into the cañon, and put their car over after them. I'm offering to give myself up. If you won't go down and verify my story, that's up to you. I'll go on.'

'Hold on. We'll go down. Better leave the woman here.'

Andy made brief arrangements for Maria; the clerk promised to see that she was made comfortable.

'Let me go too,' she protested, when Andy told her that he was going back with the sheriff to confirm his story.

'There won't be room.'

The sheriff cranked up a battered roadster standing in the dim circle of light by the hotel steps, and they began the ascent in silence, the tall sheriff bowed over the diminutive wheel, the little Scotchman trembling beside him in an agony of apprehension. As they topped the rise, the sheriff stopped and alighted to put on a chain.

'Looks wet up here.'

'It is,' said Andy, 'it poured guns all the way up.'

'How far down —' began the sheriff.

'I don't know. It was n't long after we passed a signboard that said "Avalon 14 miles" and it was right on a sharp curve where a big ledge jutted into the road.'

'Guess I know where yer mean. Road's narrer, and there ain't much wall.'

'I should say not; not half enough for such a dangerous place.'

'Road ain't used much by greenhorns. 'T ain't safe.' Half an hour passed, as the roadster crawled down the slippery roadbed, which seemed rougher and more washed out than Andy remembered. Finally the car rounded a sharp curve, with brakes set and chain dragging.

'Here we are. Now le's see. Jest show me what happened.'

'Yes, this is the place. I first stopped

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about here.' Andy took his stand in the glare of the lights from the roadster. The sheriff produced a huge flash-light and walked slowly up and down the roadway.

'Whar'd you say their car went over?'

'About here.'

'There ain't a mark to show it. Say, mister, what's the idea? There ain't been nobody killed here, nor no car put over this wall.'

'The rain has washed the tracks all out.'

'Looky here — what 's your game, anyhow? There ain't nothin' to prove what you say. And besides, no car came up since yesterday on our side.'

Andy shook his head slowly.

'I don't know what to say if you won't believe me. Could n't we go farther down and get into the cañon?'

The sheriff eyed him with scorn.

'That would take weeks and a whole party, and nothing would be gained by it. The thing for you to do is to go back to your wife and let her take care of you.'

Back at the Hotel Avalon, Maria paced her room in agitation. She had refused to eat anything. Her mind seethed with conflicting emotions. The memory of the afternoon was terrible to her beyond belief. She trembled when she thought of it. And yet one ray of brightness illumined the whole scene for her. Her husband was brave. He was strong. Single-handed he had slain two robbers. She had known him for forty years, but never before had he appeared in the rôle of knight. She had loved him always. But now — why, he was a *hero!* And how bravely he had given himself up!

A light flashed across the wall. She hurried to the window. The sheriff's roadster was just coming to a standstill outside.

Maria was waiting on the porch as Andy climbed stiffly down. She looked her question, but he shook his head dumbly in a puzzled way. The sheriff drew her aside.

'I think, ma'am, that your husband needs care.' He tapped his forehead significantly. 'He 's probably tired or somethin'. There ain't a trace to prove that yarn o' his.'

'But it 's true, every word of it.'

For a long moment the sheriff looked into her earnest face. Then he looked away across the street.

'Wal,' in a low tone, 'I dunno what to make of it. Least said soonest mended. Pussonally, I don't believe a word of it.'

Maria turned indignantly.

'Well, Andy, if we are n't needed here, let 's go.'

The sheriff leaned against the wall, lighting a cigarette.

Andy paused in doubt.

'Then you don't want — '

'No, I don't. Get on out of here.'

Andy turned on his heel, descended the steps, and opened the door of the muddy sedan.

'Get in,' he ordered briefly.

Maria obeyed in silence. Andy stepped on the starter. Suddenly she laid a hand on his arm.

'You have n't paid the clerk.'

'I don't care if I have n't. I never was in such a crazy place in my life. They don't believe a thing I say. They probably would say my money was counterfeit. I wish I was at home selling soda crackers. What 's that sign say?' For a brief moment the wavering headlights picked out the legend: 'Hunter's Gap — 30 miles.' 'We c 'n make that to-night, and then we 'll eat. I 'm famished.'

'Never mind, Andy. I know what happened. I know that you 're the bravest man I ever knew.'

Andy twisted uncomfortably in his

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seat. 'Shucks, anybody 'd 've done the same.'

'They would not, Andy Stewart. If it had n't been for you, we 'd have been in the bottom of that cañon right now.'

Seated in the tiny all-night lunch-room at the Gap, Andy and Maria ate ham and eggs in silence. Suddenly Andy looked up and nodded his head ever so slightly toward a group in the corner. Maria pricked up her ears.

'Bill back yet?' she heard.

'No,' replied a speaker in the corner. 'He figgered to make a couple o' hauls on the cañon road. Might be a week — he 'll come home the other way.'

Maria looked at Andy. Andy looked at Maria. They rose. Andy paid the bill. Outside Andy surveyed the sedan.

'Good for another stretch to-night, old girl?'

'I think,' said Maria, 'that we might just as well go on the rest of the night, and sleep somewhere to-morrow.'

Five minutes later a red tail-light disappeared down the road that led from Hunter's Gap toward civilization.

A week later Andrew Stewart — of Stewart and Hemingway, Groceries, Flour, Grain, and Feed — sat in the office of Lawyer Proctor, his legal adviser. His face was tanned beyond its usual appearance, but a deep wrinkle creased his forehead. For twenty minutes he talked earnestly. At first the lawyer's rotund face wore an expression of grave concern, but as Andy proceeded he began to smile, and then to chuckle. The smile broadened to a grin, the chuckle deepened to a roar.

'And he would n't hold you? Oho, ho, ho, ho! That 's a good one. I don't believe you did it myself, Andy.' Lawyer Proctor wiped his eyes, and then went into a fresh paroxysm. 'The sun must have touched your head a little. Oh, that is rich. Two of 'em single-handed. Andy the hero! Haw, haw, haw! Ha, ha!'

'But, hang it, man, I tell you it 's so.'

'You could n't make anybody believe it — not if they knew you, Andy. You 'd best just run along and forget it.'

That evening, as Maria was combing her back hair, Andy said briefly, 'I talked with Proctor to-day. He did n't believe a word I said.'

'Did you tell him what we heard at the Gap?'

Andy hesitated.

'N-no. I did n't.'

'I 'm glad of it. Don't you care what they say, Andy. I know that you 're a brave man. You 'll always be my hero.' She put her arms around his neck. Andy looked at her doubtfully.

'Tell me one thing, Maria. If you had n't been there, could you believe that that ever happened?'

Maria looked away for a moment.

'Don't ask me that, Andy. I was there, and I know what did happen.'

'Got a big shipment of sugar to-day,' said Andy briefly.

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# GIFTS OF SILENCE

BY LAURENCE BINYON

No sound in all the mountains, all the sky!
Yet hush! One delicate sound, minutely clear,
Makes the immense silence draw more near —
Some secret ripple of running water, shy
As a delight that hides from alien eye:
The encircling of the mountains seems an ear
Only for this; the still clouds hang to hear
All music in a sound small as a sigh.

Far below rises to the horizon rim
The silent sea. Above, those gray clouds pile;
But through them tremblingly escape, like bloom,
Like buds of beams, for sleepy mile on mile,
Wellings of light, as if Heaven had not room
For the hidden glory, and must overbrim.

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# THE MOVIE THAT COULD N'T BE SCREENED

## REEL II. DISASTER

BY NELL SHIPMAN

*October* 16

YESTERDAY Winter coughed, to-day he is down with a cold. It rained all day, stopped suddenly, the sun shone for an instant, disappeared behind a black cloud; came a clap of thunder across the lake, and then, hurrying on the white feet of the waves, a flurry of snow.

We cannot say the weather has not been good and waited just as long as it could for us, but the roof is not on the cabin and it has been so cold and slippery all day the men could not put up the rafters.

These are the times when one needs all the grace available. My Dear's foot is so terribly bad from overdoing it again — trying to get about and help — and he groans and suffers and it rains and rains and I plunge about that miserable black hole of a houseboat trying to dish up a meal for four wet, steaming men. The Boy and I eat after, like the cook and her son. My Dear is horribly shocked, but it is really more comfortable than to try to squeeze in at that tiny table with all the heat and confusion. Of course, in nice weather we ate out on our floating dining-room and it was lovely, but I can't ask them to sit out there now in the damp cold.

Sunday was Jim's birthday. I made a nice cake and we had early supper out on the raft. During the meal it grew dark and I must needs attempt to light the gasoline lantern. I am scared of the thing anyway, not being able to reconcile gas and flame in my nonmechanical mind. I turned it on too far — or fast — and fire shot out every which way. Dumbbell-like, I yelped and My Dear came running, hurting his foot horribly. So the birthday was spoiled.

To-day I exploded another Old Wife's tale. I made bread; good, sweet, crusty loaves. We ate a whole one for supper. Have always believed bread-making to be a sort of thirty-third degree of housewifery, along with baked beans, doughnuts, and pumpkin pie. Now I 've made, successfully, the entire quartette, and just you let any old cook-wife look wise at me again! There is really nothing to this cook business except to mix some sense into the making and watch the oven.

*October* 24

To-morrow is my birthday, but I refuse to recognize it even by a passing salutation. We will get up at six and go poaching with a four-by-six net we made of knotted twine, a new form of sport which is both exciting and dangerous, because a Ranger is apt to happen along at any time and you and your net are in the soup. But it is great fun hauling in a load of whitefish. They are hustling upstream, the females to spawn, the males leading the way. We get away with only a tiny millionth of all that are there, so I do not feel very wicked, and we do need them most awfully for food. Whitefish is the



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stand-by three times a day now, and we don't call 'Come to dinner!' We say 'Come to whitefish!'

The cabin is now being roofed with shakes. These are long, natural shingles sliced like slivers of yellow butter from chunks of cedar. One man holds a long knife-thing which another whacks with a hardwood bludgeon, and down peels the shake. When we get the roof on and the doors and windows in we 'll feel more secure against the cold that is descending in swoops. The little tent I am living in is hardly warm. It is not extra clean either, at present, because the Boy overfilled the oil stove and left it burning. When I came in everything was covered with an inch of oily black soot and I have spent two days trying to wash it off.

Went to the village yesterday to mail the order for the winter grub, enclosing Uncle T——'s check for five hundred dollars and blessing him.

We have found a country grocer who will sell at rock-bottom prices and deliver the things — 'lay them down' they call it — at the dock. It is a tremendous saving, as the freight on bulky things is frightful. We 'll have our hay, flour, cereals, vegetables, and food all laid away, and when our cabin is done we 'll feel pretty snizzlish.

What comparatively small things can make you happy! Once I had two cars and two homes and a fat salary and about eleven wardrobe-trunks full of duds, and the Lord knows what else, and my combined possessions did not give me the acquisitive joy I feel as I gloat over our winter's stores. This is a for-true 'grub-stake' and no fooling.

The trip down was lovely, all clear blue and radiant gold. The tamaracks are especially beautiful now, vivid amber tufts against the dark-green backing — a most nice tree at all seasons. In spring they froth over with light green; even dead and leaning against the skyline they never fail to be picturesque. I have seen sapling tamaracks in winter bent over and piled high with snow until the forest was a succession of marble arches.

The big back-range is snow-covered now and the Chimneys stand out so clearly etched they seem to have spotlights playing on them. Coming home the moon was up and the lake just enough wind-tossed to make a moon path. Dear God, You did make things most beautiful!

To-morrow I 'm thirty. But I won't grow old. I won't jell, get set in mind and figure, be thick-waisted and solid-legged. Sometimes, when I am so very tired and discouraged, I believe I 'm going to hop off soon, and I am outrageously delighted at the prospect; but bless you, I 'm too like dear mother ever to get out of it before my time. She wanted to die for ten years, but she felt her work was not done. The day when she came creeping upstairs, that fearful black time of the flu, and took one good look at me and was satisfied that I could not pull through, and my brother was off in France, gassed and in the hospital with double pneumonia, why then she just crept off downstairs again to her own quiet room and lay down and died. She was sure we were both going and she wanted to get there first; perhaps to speak a good word for us in passing, knowing that we should need a friend at the gate.

No, there is no chance of my finding a premature parking-place. I shall live to be a raw-boned horse of an old woman with a mass of short white hair under a rakish red-velvet hat; never a nice, comfortable, white-wool rabbit with a pretty pink scalp.

Oh dear, I wish if we can't get to making pictures I could at least be writing on my book! My dolls are lonely and want to come out and play — Enid and Dodo and Sophie P. It is

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worth living thirty years to have managed Sophie.

My great consolation is that somehow all we are going through will make a writer or a better actress out of me. It ought to make something! My poor, poor hands! They say 'worked to the bone,' but the phrase is a fallacy. Work of this kind swells them and gnarls the joints; the nails get broken and rough, and the finger-ends like nutmeg-graters.

And so my diary goes on — a monotonous chronicle of work and worry, food and hope, debt and suffering. On the first of November snow fell, and a few days later we were actually installed in the cabin and I said good-bye to my black hole of a house boat.

The cabin was very pretty, rustic throughout and snug against the weather, except for the shake roof, which had been badly laid and so leaked. With the finishing of the cabin, and before the animals were fixed for the winter, came a peck of grief. We had expected a little money from our last venture, but it was 'held out on us,' as they say, by two of the creditors into whose eager paws it chanced to fall, and we were quite destitute. Two of our men quit at this juncture and demanded their wages. There being no blood in the stone, they attached the motor boat and a great lummox of a gasoline wood-saw. The latter was no great loss, as we had no gas with which to run it; but the departure of the boat was a grievous catastrophe, as it left us absolutely without means of transportation, and the condition of My Dear's foot was daily growing more alarming. The awful sword of gangrene now dangled over our heads. If it fell, how could we get him down the lake and into a hospital?

Good balanced the bad. Correspondence with a camera man who had been with us before led to an agreement whereby he was to come here and make a series of short pictures of outdoor adventure, sharing in the profits of the series in lieu of salary; and through an Eastern connection we were extended credit for a supply of negative film.

Here was a chance to build back, an answer to our prayers! If only we could get My Dear out before the lake froze over! We had determined that an operation was the only salvation and we bent every effort and thought to the ways and means. Along about Christmas I had a mad notion. Only a few weeks before, I had made the long, cold journey down-lake and by automobile to a small town south of us, to appear at a benefit performance for a local Woman's Club. The house had been good, the applause quite gratifying, and I bethought me — why not give a benefit for myself? There is a certain amount of curiosity with regard to the personality of a movie star on the part of the public. A curiosity, I may say, that when satisfied usually tends to disappointment. They think you are going to be different from regular two-legged, flesh-and-blood animated structures, and the discovery that an actress in 'real life' looks and acts just like anyone else makes them mad.

I made arrangements to appear 'personally' in two towns and departed, my heart heavy with misgivings, for I had to take with me the Boy and a young fellow who was working for us. This left Old Daddy and My Dear quite alone. I was desperate enough to put my show over all by myself, but my partner insisted that I take what help was available. The little steamboat had come up to take us out and, as we chugged away, my last view of the snow-burdened ranch included two brave figures waving good-bye, the big straight one with his crutch, the little bent one with his corncob pipe.

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The misadventures of my lecture tour have no place in this record. Suffice that the proceeds were enough to defray the necessary doctor and hospital arrangements for My Dear.

On New Year's Eve a terrible blizzard hit the Northwest, tying up everything. It took three days for the snowplough to battle the thirty miles from the railroad to the lakeside, and when I finally got to the village the lake was frozen. Not safely and nicely all over its huge expanse, but in hunks. The bay was ice-locked, and though the little steamer battled and crunched, backed, filled, and fought the ice for eighteen hours, she could not break a channel.

What of my two men alone at the upper end? Worse than alone, really, because of the care of the animals. The thermometer had dropped to thirty-five below and then come back to twenty, where it hung. Twenty below zero is bitter cold in the lake regions. It would take two able-bodied men all their daylight hours to keep the fires going in that cabin, let alone feed the insufficiently housed Zoo. And one man was a cripple suffering hellish pain, and the other was seventy years old. They would be worrying about us, horribly. They had had no word of us for ten days; did not know if we had ever reached our destination, let alone come back. I learned a little later that at this time Old Daddy, with an idea of soothing the patient, developed into a Greek chorus of woe. 'Where can they be?' the sick man would moan. 'We don't know. Maybe they are at the bottom of the lake!' 'Yes,' echoed Daddy, 'maybe they are!' 'Or perhaps,' the sufferer would continue, 'perhaps the auto stage skidded in the snow and hurled them all down the mountainside!' 'Yes,' agreed Daddy, bound to accommodate, 'perhaps it did!'

Down at the village I watched the stubby-nosed steamer bruise and batter herself against that unrelenting ice for a day and a half; then, early the next morning, I approached the weary-eyed captain, who was gamely sawing up four-foot wood for another day's fight. I said: 'Can you make it?' and he said, 'No, I don't think I can; but I 'm willing to keep on trying.' I believe he would have kept on all winter, or at any rate till he had burned up all the wood in the forest, but it was a losing game. It was so cold that with every foot his boat gained the channel closed that much behind him, the broken chunks knitting together into solid ice.

There seemed only one solution, or rather two, and I proposed to pilot them up-lake, over ice when there was ice and by the beach when there was none. The risk of the trip was nothing compared with the horror of sitting in safety at one end and not knowing if Life or Death waited at the other. I would not expose the Boy to the journey; it was doubtful how many days it would take, everything depending upon the condition of the ice. Our lake is twenty-one miles long if you 're a crow, but allowing for all the deep-curved bays of the shore line it is a good forty. So I left the Boy, protesting to the last, with a kindly woman who runs a restaurant in the village. The young fellow, whom the newspapers referred to rather grandly in the accounts of the adventure as an 'attaché of the camp,' was game and stuck, although it turned out later he was mortally afraid of the ice and the water under the ice. I always think that a coward who turns brave is the very bravest kind of man.

So we started. Somebody suggested that we should have a boat and drag it over the ice to the first water, but no one offered the loan of one, or help in the dragging. I made a tentative remark concerning snowshoes in event of

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our having to hit the inland trail, but there seemed to be a dearth of such footwear. I really think that they did not expect us to get there and felt they could use their boats and shoes to better advantage at home than as interior decorations for the lake.

The first bay proved good crossing, the ice thick and just slick enough to permit running slides, which speeded up travel considerably; but at the point we came to open water and started on a long trek, traveling four miles south again before we could head north. This bay continued endlessly and it had no beach, just a sharp, rocky ledge pitching sheer into the water. The rocks were thick with ice and entailed much scrambling, pulling, and clawing, with sometimes a brief wading-spell in the icy water. It was late afternoon before the lad and I made Eight-Mile Island. Here we found a small stretch of good ice, crossed it briskly to the channel, and rounded the point, only to find Indian Bay wide open. Our hearts did rather flop. We were very tired, and this open water, stretching, as nearly as we could tell, to Cape Horn, meant miles of the same kind of ice-rock hiking we had endured all morning.

Far up on the beach we discovered an old hulk of a rowboat, battered and worthless, but still more or less of a boat, and I had a brilliant idea. We would drag this down the beach, over the hundred yards or so of ice, launch it, and paddle it to Cape Horn. If the Narrows were open maybe we could paddle all the way home.

It took an hour of fast-dying daylight to manœuvre the old hulk into the water, but finally she floated, the lad and I in her, each grasping a piece of salvaged two-by-four pressed into service as paddles. The Lena, as we christened her, leaked like a Swiss cheese, but the air was so cold the water froze inside her. Our mittens had got wet during the launching and they froze fast to the improvised paddles.

And so we paddled across the long bay in the fiery glow of a sunset that held no heat, the lake glassy smooth, and the new ice, being born all about us, making a sweet, tinkly temple-bell sound against the sides of the boat. With twilight came the inevitable north wind and things were not quite so lovely. Our lake can kick up from a ripple to a man-sized whitecap in five minutes and is a regular meeting-place for the winds. Also, Lena was rapidly filling up, and all my frantic bailing with an old coffee-can seemed of little avail. After a while it grew very dark and we wondered, to ourselves, where Cape Horn was, though to each other we shouted, above the wind, such conventional remarks as 'Pretty dark, ain't it?' 'Yep; God help the movies on a night like this!' 'You cold?' 'Not — much. Are you?' 'Nope.'

It was probably about seven, or after, when the low-riding bow of the Lena grounded against something and I peered anxiously into the gathered blackness. 'It 's ice,' I announced. I imagined it was frozen from the Cape to Reader Creek. But was it good ice? That was the question. Should we get out on it, abandon our leaky craft, and set forth for parts unknown on this strange black floe? Did it go all the way to shore or was it perhaps just a floating island?

We whanged at it with our two-by-fours and pieces sloughed off. We decided that perhaps it would be better to keep on paddling for a bit. Unless the ice took a big curve at the bay we might reach the shore, where there was a cabin belonging to the steamboat captain. We could break into that.

Some kind of shelter was growing imperative. The wind was bitterly cold and we both were wet and exhausted, although we still made inanely facetious



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remarks to each other above the howl of the gale. So we paddled back to what we guessed was the nearest point to shore and disembarked. The lad jumped first, while I sat tight and prayed that the ice would hold him, then that it would hold my additional weight as I jumped. It did, though it groaned a bit, and we wisely decided not to try to save Lena. She was almost half full of water and the dead weight of the boat dragged up on the ice would surely sink us. We waved her farewell and started shoreward, without even the feeble help of a flashlight — another object we had tried, unsuccessfully, to borrow.

It was a curious sensation, walking that slick black ice at night, knowing only vaguely our general direction, trusting that the ice would go all the way to shore, that we should miss air-holes, that the big zooming cracks shooting out from under and around us were really only the effects of the extreme cold — not warnings of instant submersion.

Somewhere along the dim, dark shore was a shack where two woodcutters lived. They were away, but we knew the cabin would be open and there would be grub and a stove. We edged on, bit by bit, our occasional remarks still lightly keyed in a last attempt at a bravado we did not feel. And after a very long time indeed we crashed through the rotten shore-ice, waded in water that topped our boots, and staggered to the beach. The snow had drifted and before we found the woodcutters' shack we wallowed to our armpits; but somewhere under the snow's soft whiteness was ground, regular solid earth — and we did n't care. The shack was a mere summer-shell of a place, with enough holes in the walls to throw out all the cats in the country; but it had a small stove which was soon red hot, and the cupboard gave up a bag of farina and some coffee. We made a great pot of mush and another of coffee and blessed the woodcutters, their heirs and assigns. By sitting alternately with our backs and fronts to the fire we managed to thaw out, and eventually sheer weariness overcame a slightly creepy aversion on my part to the greasy huddle of bedding on the lone cot, and I slept while the lad kept the fire blazing.

At daybreak we started for home over clear ice that covered the lake with a great sheet of plate glass. Near shore the rocks and weeds of the bottom were visible through the ice, but where the lake was deep one seemed to be walking on crystallized water. Dotted all over the surface were dainty fern-shapes formed by the frost, and in a bit of open water I saw ice lily-pads with frilled and fluted edges.

There were no adventures on that day — just a tireless plugging along, over the ice when it was good, along the beach at the open places. It was late afternoon when we rounded the point and the dog-chorus gave welcome. We were home! My Dear was safe; ill from apprehension and worry, in great pain from overuse of his poor foot — but at least alive! They had experienced sub-arctic weather, the food freezing upon the table before they could eat it. My sweet Niki Sia, the Panama deer, had frozen to death the night of the big drop, but everything else had pulled through. The nightmare was over, so we thought; really it had just begun.

*(To be continued)*

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# LEISURE — FOR WHAT?

BY GEORGE W. ALGER

## I

One of the outstanding defects in modern education is that it takes no account of leisure as a permanent factor in our life.

There is doubtless plenty of excuse for this lapse. Neither in ancient society nor in any state of society prior to our own had the average freeman occasion to concern himself with any problem of leisure. Leisure itself, considered as the surplus of time not definitely required for daily practical tasks, is for most of us a very recent affair. It is an essentially modern phenomenon. It is largely a by-product of man's conquest of nature, his development of newly discovered energies of nature to supplement or release his own. Leisure has come to us slowly, unevenly, unequally.

Some classes derive their leisure as a by-product of the mechanization of lives in other classes, with which they have no further relations. To others it has come as a direct result of the harnessing of steam and electricity to what were formerly human tasks. To some narrowing groups it has not yet come at all.

We recently have been considering the steel worker with his twelve-hour day, now reduced to eight. During this discussion it has been estimated that some 300,000 American workers, of which the steel people are a major part, are still subject to the twelve-hour day.

We fail to realize how amazing these figures really are. A generation ago this was the regular day for practically all our working people. To have reduced in less than two generations the twelve-hour class to only 300,000 is almost an industrial miracle.

The leisure-making process, moreover, is still at work. A great scientist and electrical wizard, who died a few years ago, prophesied that we are approaching a time when man's control over electric energy, chemistry, and mechanical forces will enable a four-hour day to suffice for the needs of physical life. A startling revolution in life is being evolved.

Science is continuously affording new methods of control over the processes of nature, which make for the existence of a social surplus of which no other generation dreamed — a surplus of products and of wealth created in such quantities that, given adequate and just distribution, it is more than sufficient to meet those age-old problems of poverty which pietists hardly a century ago believed to be an inevitable doom and a part of the inscrutable purpose of God. They considered it an unescapable fact that there was in nature not enough to go around; and Malthus's theory of population was accepted as a disagreeable mathematical certainty.

Our ancestors considered not only poverty but continuous labor a necessary and unavoidable thing. The present social surplus, due to the conquest



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of nature and the discoveries of science, was unthinkable.

While radical minds to-day are dealing with the injustice of the distribution of the social surplus of things, on the assumption that a better world is possible when the redistribution is made on different lines, practically no discussion has been devoted either by radicals or by conservatives to what is really an equally important aspect of the matter. The growing social surplus is not only of things but of time. The time surplus, for convenience of discussion, I call 'leisure.'

The pressure of enlightened public sentiment for the enlargement of this social surplus in time is continuous and inevitable, due to contrasts the injustice of which become year by year more apparent. The growing interest of socially-minded people, for example, in shortening the long hours of women and children is due to a commendable desire to remove an injustice that becomes year by year clearer in its contrast with the rapidly increasing leisure time in other groups. Hard work for long hours in times prior to the advent of high-speed operations in industry is becoming less and less possible under the tension of modern working-conditions, and the experiments of industrial engineers have shown that shorter hours can be made to be really more productive.

A very considerable and increasing body of leisure for workers in the industrial field has been due not only to humanitarian legislation but to facts concerning human capacities, ascertained by a cold-blooded modern industrial psychology applied to the study of work-fatigue. The long working-day is an anachronism. Notwithstanding the slow process of its elimination in certain industries, its ultimate disappearance is inevitable. The battle for the shorter day is still on, and it is perhaps unreasonable to expect those engaged in the struggle to gain it to stop to discuss what they will do with it when they get it.

## II

The meagre discussion which the time surplus has received has been in the main due to the questionable assumption that leisure is a thing good in itself. Create the four-hour day, — if this dream is not too remote, — and it is assumed that the margin of leisure thus created will take care of itself, will prove beneficial to its recipients. The pressure for the shorter day never has taken into consideration what is to be done with the balance of the day when it is released from labor. That the newly created leisure should itself be a new and distinct problem has never been considered. It is not unfair to say that the assumption generally made is that leisure and happiness are practically synonymous, so that if we attain leisure and fail in happiness it is in some special way our own individual fault, for which no one but the sufferer himself is to blame.

The defect in this assumption need not be discussed here. I think, however, it may be said that the relationship between leisure and happiness is year by year becoming for the vast body of our workers a more serious problem. Perhaps one reason is that, for a number of causes, we are less fit for leisure than any previous generation, and that leisure is potentially more injurious under existing conditions and in the absence of education for leisure than at any previous period in the world's history.

Leisure itself has been won, in large part, by the subdivision of processes by specialization and by increased mechanization of industry and the development of the iron man. The

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tasks of countless thousands of our workers are to-day so uninteresting, so monotonous, so mechanical, that there is no happiness in the daily toil.

One of the current problems of industrial psychology is that of evolving new incentives to make men work hard and effectually at these monotonous tasks. We have as yet evolved no sufficient philosophy by which the uses of leisure are given any special function as incentives to work. Our psychology on work-incentives proceeds happily along so-called practical lines. Man should work at his task mainly spurred on by the hope that he will receive a financial compensation never quite sufficient to enable him to buy things which other workers have made and which alluring advertisements have induced him to want. The worker's life should be a pendulum between producing and purchasing; and his leisure a happy hunting-ground for what to buy or as a means of displaying or using something which he has bought. In the opinion of these psychologists, happiness is attained by us by taking in one another's washing.

The stimulus of what we want to buy, rather than what we want to be, is, in current theory, that which keeps us at work.

The people who can set before us a long list of new things to want, in a way to make us want them irresistibly, are the main contributors to our current squirrel-cage conception of progress. No doubt any theory of the use of leisure which should make it something else than principally an expression of the buying-power might be considered an alarming heresy because of its possible effect on sales. Is it not conceivable, however, that more leisure might come to all of us, and that we should try harder to get it for our fellows, if those who have it made it seem more valuable?

In the intelligent use of working-time, in the practical application of energy to desired productive results, we Americans are supposed to be highly efficient. Can anyone say the same of our use of leisure, or does our working-life paralyze our power to apply our released energies to anything worth while? The use of our time for earning our daily bread makes most of us perform tasks which represent not our personalities but our necessities. If what we do with ourselves when we are free from our tasks is the criterion of what we really are, how many of us would be proud of the way we meet the test of leisure? How many of us are yet fit for a leisure world? How many of us do use leisure so as to make the return of the twelve-hour day seem a consummation devoutly to be wished? Yet leisure is our doom, and even the four-hour day may prove to be a not impossible imagining.

The old-time artisan, on the other hand, to a much greater extent was accustomed to self-expression in his work. Being accustomed to self-expression in his industrial life, it was far easier for him to carry through self-expression into the very limited field of leisure which the circumstances of his life afforded him; as illustrated, for example, in the spontaneous expression of peasant races in folk dances and pageants, and in the folk music which we to-day are endeavoring to transform into jazz for fox trots.

Owing to the difference in the quality of work and the lack of self-expression through work, our enlarged leisure to-day takes mainly a receptive instead of an expressive form.

A main defect — from a cultural point of view — of the movies, for example, is that the people who see them contribute nothing to them. They are simply receptive of what the miracle-workers of Hollywood produce for

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their diversion. We are slow to realize that one of the effects of the specialization or mechanization of our life in our zeal for enlarged production is this closing-in of the fields of self-expression for the individual, the mechanization of what were formerly processes of self-expression. The mechanical piano, the phonograph, and the radio make the long toil of learning music as a personal accomplishment seem less worth while.

Except for a relatively small group, and that public which finds expression in crossword puzzles, our souls sit on the bleachers and watch a game played no longer by us but for us.

We have before us, in a new and common form, dangers to which, as Hamerton said in his *Intellectual Life* years ago, the rich were peculiarly exposed: —

'Even his modesty, when he is modest, tends to foster his reliance on others rather than on himself. All that he tries to do is done so much better by those who make it their profession that he is always tempted to fall back upon his paying-power as his most satisfactory and effective force.'

Any process whose most conspicuous result is an enormous increase of mechanical labor, involving a constantly diminishing field for personal expression for man in the mass; any process which takes the educational factor out of man's personal industry, which increases both the quantity of the things that support physical life and the quality of the mass of human beings, and yet diminishes the field of self-expression for the average individual in his leisure as well as in his work, by failing to educate him to the use of leisure, and makes sterile his diversion — this is a process which hardly can be called progress.

The habits acquired through our current passive and receptive bleacher-type of leisure also have had a debilitating effect upon us as citizens. We participate personally in our politics about as much as we do in our play. We listen to campaign speeches on the radio as we are accustomed to listen to the fox trots from our favorite broadcasting stations, and with the same individual intensity. We turn them off when we do not like the arguments or the quality of the candidate's voice.

Less than half of us, women as well as men, bother to vote at all. Voting at election is a distinctly easy process, a sort of movie-going business at the most. Participating in the primaries where nominations are made is a much more important matter and involves initiative — which is too much for most of us.

The really weak spot in current politics is the failure of our people to take their place in the primaries. A receptive and passive citizenry cannot make a democracy which is worth while. The cracker barrel in the country store afforded far better training for public life than ever will be furnished by the unaided radio and the newspapers. The cracker-barrel discussions may have lacked learning and highly desirable information on public questions, but they had the vitamines — the personal interest, the personal expression of individual thought or prejudice of their participants. The leisure habits of a people which takes its pleasure by suction rather than by expression make them fully satisfied if in their relations to public life they have risen to the dignity of a referee at a ball game and are performing a closely parallel function. A wilderness of referees, however, will not improve a game of baseball or do much to elevate the quality of service in our public life.

That is no adequate excuse for our failure to improve our political institutions or the personnel of our public

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offices. More men and women have more time to devote to these matters than at any previous period of our history. Who can fairly deny the charge that it is our lack of adequate conceptions of the obligations as well as the pleasures of leisure which is at the basis of the difficulty? Science has given us more ways than we ever had before of frittering away our time. We are using them all and crying for more.

It is a question whether, on the whole, science has as yet added much to the subtler aspects of human happiness. To the obvious forms of distraction it has of course contributed many things capable of mathematical computation by statistics. Progress from the point of view of science is very largely an affair of figures, and we are assured that it has in store for us a continuing line of additions to progress of a similar quality. For example: we know more to-day about scientific ways and means of killing one another and of destroying property than ever before, the latest triumph being the airplane which, without an aviator but governed and directed by radio, can carry and discharge death-dealing gases to the destruction of whole cities.

If we refrain from using these new instrumentalities of death and destruction, it will be, I think, not because of the teaching of science but in spite of it. It will be because we ultimately shall have learned how to fill the content of leisure with the seeds of peace by some superscientific means.

The reapplication of love to life is the greatest practical problem before us, on the solution of which the future of Western civilization depends. It is not a mechanical or a scientific problem; it is a cultural problem. Science adds little to the solution of cultural problems, for cultural progress depends upon a cultural theory of success. It depends upon a system of education which adds to the capacity of the individual to be happy as well as efficient. Even the beginning of such a system of education is not yet apparent in this country, nor are the needs of such a system understood.

## III

The only subject of major importance on which there is with us no adequate statistical information where such information is perhaps possible is in this very matter of the uses of leisure. To what extent is America a country which is subnormal in its amusements? What percentage of our people derive their main cultural inspiration from the movies? How many million readers have the shoddy story-weeklies and monthlies and the new dailies, which are mostly pictures? Do the people who read lowbrow literature read anything else? Is there any process at work by which readers pass on and up and finally graduate from the deadly mess furnished by the average news-stand, or is the condition more or less permanent? To what extent is the gallery at the opera Nordic in its content, and how far does the music of our great cities depend for support upon Jews, Germans, and Italians?

Statistics on the present uses of leisure by our people could be assembled which might or might not give aid and comfort to the Ku Klux Klan or the cult of 100 per cent Americanism.

In all seriousness, why would not a 'leisure' survey add something important to our information on progress, real or apparent, toward culture? What more real test for the vitality of our higher education than a statistical survey that shows how far — to use a golf term — culture 'follows through' into postgraduate life? A survey of the state of culture in the United States would be worth all it costs, for we

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respect statistics more than any other country and spend more money in other fields in accumulating them.

Helvetius tells us that the amount of intellect necessary to please us is the most accurate measure of the amount of intellect we have ourselves. Most of us, I think, would shrink from having so drastic a test applied to ourselves, though we may concede its logic.

I remember some years ago having had a morbid dream. What Freudian explanation for it there may be I do not know. It was in two parts or cycles and was this: —

The tower of the Woolworth Building suddenly burst forth with a torrent of molten lava, which ultimately submerged the city of New York. Centuries passed; and then some archæologists, delving in the ruins of what had been the subway, came upon a subway news-stand. They doubtless were able from the publications so found to give the world a true picture of the classic culture of buried New York. I was fortunate enough to wake up before their conclusions on this interesting subject were announced.

## IV

This paper is not intended as a mere discussion of æsthetics. The matter is a far more serious one. Take the subject which we are discussing so much to-day — the growth of lawlessness. The relationship between lawlessness and leisure is not often discussed, yet there is a direct relationship between morality and fatigue, and it was fatigue which favored the law with our ancestors. A man who has done a long day's work, who approaches the end of that day physically tired, is far less likely to commit crime or to indulge in antisocial conduct than the man who finds his energies still fresh at the end of his task. Our forefathers were less tempted than we, and the excess burden of contemporary temptation is something which we seem quite to overlook when we deplore the conduct of our youngsters.

There are to-day not only more things to want and to have, but more time in which to enjoy them. The essential difference between us and our forefathers is not that they were perhaps intrinsically much better morally than we, but that they were accustomed to harder conditions of life, to the discipline of a continuous environment of work, to a theory of life which was mainly work. The tired horse rarely runs away.

We Americans are justly alarmed at certain aspects of our present life. While we have more wealth and more leisure than any other country, we have, at the same time, a crime record which is unparalleled in the past history of the civilized world and which is wholly out of proportion to that of any other civilized country to-day.

Doctor Hoffman, Chief Statistician of the Prudential Life Insurance Company, who has for the past twenty-three years computed the homicide rate for twenty-eight American cities, says, speaking of the figures which he has compiled for the year 1923: 'This is the most amazing murder-record for any civilized country for which data are available. It indicates a state of affairs so startling and of such significance that no government, federal or state, can rightfully ignore the situation. The murder rate has practically doubled in twenty-four years.'

He gives the homicide rate for the United States from 1911 to 1921 as 7.2 per 100,000 of population. Italy, the next worst country for murder, has only 3.6 per 100,000, and no other country measurably approaches the United States in the murderous tendency of its population. England and

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Wales had in the same period .05, Scotland .04, and Switzerland .02 murders per 100,000 of population.

He tells us that in 1921 there were two hundred and thirty-seven murders committed in New York City as against ninety in all England and Wales. Last year there were twenty-seven murders in London against two hundred and sixty-two in New York. An extension of these statistics is hardly necessary.

One additional feature is, however, that in crimes of theft and robbery our bad eminence is equally appalling.

Why is it that crime in America is wholly out of proportion to crime in other civilized countries? Why do we have a record which cannot be equaled even in the most war-wrecked country of Europe? Those who attribute all these blots on our national escutcheon to defects in our criminal law and our courts and the shortcomings of our police are shortsighted indeed. Why are we the greatest consumers of habit-forming drugs? Why are our insanity records appalling and getting worse? Of course we cannot ascribe all these disgraceful conditions to any single cause, but one cause that is among the most fundamental we have scarcely considered at all. We have never regarded leisure as the microbe-bed from which these diseases come naturally and almost inevitably.

As industry grows less interesting to its participants and creates continuously less joy in work, we have, as a result, a not inconsiderable class of our young people seeking a more exciting and hazardous substitute for a life of such toil. A dull background of uninteresting work, moreover, produces or tends to produce, in the leisure of those who work, reactions to make a balance by excitement, thrill, danger, dope, and lawlessness.

We have tried and are still trying repression, censorship, police regulations, prohibition, new statutes, criminal prosecution, and perpetual preaching against lawlessness. We are making little progress and we have sufficient sense to know it. There must have been a moment when even Mrs. Partington realized that the Atlantic Ocean was too much for her. On the other hand, those whose business it is to give the people what they think they want are busily engaged in purveying jazz, movie thrillers, and limburger literature. Lawlessness not only exists and flourishes as never before; it has a philosophy in a bogus European psychology, adopted and adapted, that believes in no repression, but in the yielding to instinct and the destruction of the duty-principle as a 'complex.'

Some years ago a distinguished financier explained that the cause of a financial panic was an accumulation of undigested securities. May not undigested leisure have a like effect? The most pathetic part about American prosperity, of which we hear so much, especially around election time, is the form of its leisure. If industrial civilization breaks up, — and who knows whether it will? — it will be largely because leisure fails of its promise of happiness. It is high time that we thought of the relation between uneducated and untrained leisure and the permanence of our civilization.

The massive head of Rodin's Thinker still leans on his tired arm as he sits in front of the Pantheon in Paris. I always visualize him as the giant of toil, taking a moment's breathing-time before he resumes his weary task. He is not really thinking. What if there were given to him leisure sufficient to think of the meaningless monotony of his toil without dignity, and to consider his now suppressed uneasiness about the value to him of his industrially efficient life?

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## V

This is not the place for discussing any theory of a leisure class or indulging in any of the rhapsodical attacks of the socialist on the unfair distribution of the alleged benefits of idleness. There is nothing yet to prove that leisure has conferred any special blessings of contentment on any large class of workers whose hours of labor would have been considered in any previous generation inconceivably short.

Happiness escapes charts and compasses. If some delicate instrument could be devised to gauge joy in life, it might well be doubted whether its measurements would show that the released worker who to-day spends his surplus hours at the movies or in driving his flivver for miles in aimless wanderings has any more happiness in those hours of leisure than his father had in working from daybreak to dark and enjoying a vacation only when sick. The relationship between the restlessness of discontent and the use of gasoline is not fanciful but real. The main contribution of the automobile to the happiness of a growing leisure-class is that it furnishes a new way of transforming an otherwise unbearable leisure into a mode of motion, with gasoline performing the function of a soothing syrup for grown-up children.

We are so intent upon material production as the main purpose of life that we seem to have subordinated everything else to it. We think that our institutions are safe as long as we produce things in greater quantities. We want 'safe' immigrants.

Our whole immigration policy to-day is based upon the idea of newcomers as producers, and the only form of production that interests us is the production of goods. We examine the immigrant for trachoma. We never ask him whether he can sing or dance or play. Yet, when we consider our poverty in productive leisure, would such questions be necessarily absurd? We do not as yet consider in connection with this immigration problem, for example, what contribution races may — or might — make to our joy of living. On the contrary, we nullify the contribution that these races would be able to make to our culture, killing as fast as we can the culture they bring to us, through a process of Americanization that spoils all but the most persistent of them, and does not help us.

Those of us who are Nordics doubtless derive some satisfaction from the superiority which we are alleged to possess over other races, to which are being given neat new names properly to describe their lower worth in the sight of God and the Nordic man. Personally it is in connection with this subject of leisure that my misgivings interfere with the comfort which my complete Nordicism should afford me. A long succession of incidents in dealing with rather humble people has led me to feel sure that the unspoiled or newly arrived Mediterranean has something to teach us, if we would listen, about the uses of leisure.

Some years ago we had a Polish cook. Her days out were spent more or less alternately between playing chess with the automaton chess-player at the Eden Musée and going to the opera. Money spent on clothes seemed an extravagance to her, but spending it on music was a form of economy.

An amusing combination of these wholly un-American traits was well illustrated on an occasion which I recall when she fished out of the waste-basket some very much outworn gloves of my wife, cleaned them carefully, and wore them triumphantly to a concert at the Biltmore where Sembrich sang, and on which she lavished five hard-earned dollars.

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A few months ago I called at the shoemaker's in the country town where I live in the summer, for a small repair job on my golf shoes. Our shoemaker is as un-Americanized a little old Italian as you can imagine, and he keeps a dirty shop on a mean street near the railroad station. Every possible mark of poverty was upon him. One of his boys, a lad about ten, was picking up scraps of leather in the shop. We conversed.

'I have a new violin,' he said with some pride.

'Do you play?' I asked.

'Not yet,' he said, 'but I take lessons. My father has a teacher come up twice a week from Norwalk.'

'Does anybody else in the family play?'

'They are too little; only my sister, she plays the piano.'

'Have you a piano?'

'Yes,' said the old shoemaker quietly, 'not very good, but good to learn. I like music. Music nice,' he added, as he chewed the thread reflectively. 'Not much music here — all movie.'

I suppose when the boy is a few years older and has become fully Americanized he will learn to despise the old-fashioned ideas the father has brought with him to America, and his painful effort to transplant in a new and practical world the things which meant color, life, and happiness in the world from which he came. Just now, however, the boy is in the proud enjoyment of the violin and the lessons from Norwalk.

When we learn to classify men as inferior or superior by what they do with their leisure, we shall attain, among other results, a new angle upon race prejudice and perhaps find a new solvent for the heretofore insoluble.

A friend whose mania for classification goes beyond all present accepted standards divides his associates and acquaintances into groups, the A group being those who stimulate his highest intellectual powers and whose interests include the broadest and best cultural fields. 'All my friends in this class except two,' he says mournfully, 'are Jews, no one of whom could belong to any good club in the City.' Sometime perhaps we shall consider who loses most by this process, the club or the Jew.

The development of a philosophy of life that includes a rational use of leisure is particularly difficult to the New England temperament. Howells analyzes this difficulty in a shrewd observation upon one of the characters in his *Fearful Responsibility*. 'He was one of those people, common enough in our Puritan civilization, who would rather forgo any pleasure than incur the reactions which must follow with all the keenness of remorse, and he always mechanically pitied (for the operation was not a natural one) such unhappy people as he saw enjoying themselves.'

'I am going into town,' said the old Yankee, 'and like enough I'll get drunk, and Lord! how I dread it!'

The old New England temper, with all its priceless moral qualities, was nevertheless one for a working, Old Testament world that followed from sunrise to sunset the Biblical admonition, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' The old hymns that they continue to sing in New England churches picture the after life mainly as a place for rest, which the Puritan expected to attain only in Heaven. The world of leisure on this planet is a new and dreadful world to him, full of the reactions incidental to its pleasures, and to be approached with fear and caution. To the New England temper leisure means a perilous voyage on a chartless sea, one not to be undertaken in a spirit of adventurous abandon.

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## VI

While we spend so much of our time as we do in defending our institutions against attack, it is well for us to remember that the main threat comes, and must come, not from without but from within. A civilization that creates a leisure which it cannot rationally use may well be in greater danger of destruction than one that has no leisure at all. A civilization that bores its beneficiaries is perhaps even worse than one that overworks its slaves. A world fit for democracy is a far easier aim than a world fitted for leisure. Democracy can stand the test of war. Whether it can stand the test of uninspired leisure and survive is quite another matter. At least we should begin to recognize the problem and the necessity for its solution.

Why do we not see that what is returning to us is slavery in a new form? The vital defect of slavery was not only what it did to the slaves but also what it did to their masters. History tells us of the softening and disintegrating influence upon civilizations having their work done, not by applied energy of their freemen, but by slaves who obeyed the masters' bidding, leaving the masters to vice and the luxuries of a degenerating idleness. The slaves suffered, to be sure; but they destroyed their masters; for the civilization of their masters perished as a tree that rots from within.

The danger of the new slavery is almost wholly to the masters, and in 'masters' we include classes that in no previous era considered themselves masters in any sense; some of them are, in fact, inclined to call themselves to-day wage slaves. Even the most ideal redistribution of wealth and of leisure under social justice will not and cannot change the essential quality of this danger in any particular. The iron men who work for us, the slaves mustered in increasing numbers to do our work, are no longer flesh and blood. In the old South not much over ten per cent of the population were slave-owners. We are all slave-owners to-day, and the slave-traders of our time are not akin to the pitiless people who once filled our South with black bondage. They are industrial engineers, electrical experts, chemists, and men of wisdom in the sciences.

Our slavery comes not from the darkness but from the light, and the new slavery is called 'progress.' The old escape, moreover, is not open to us. These slaves we will never set free. For better or for worse they will serve us as long as our civilization lasts. We have no intention of returning to the life of toil from which they have released us. The genius of the magic lamp will forever work for the hands that hold it. There is no way out but by meeting the remorseless test of the lamp, by proving that we can live in a slave world without succumbing to those insidiously enervating influences which have destroyed all the slave-made states of the past.

The great problem before us to-day is to create a civilization that does not degenerate under leisure. This can be done only by setting in operation forces making for a culture that recognizes, as no civilization since the fall of Rome has been required to do, that leisure is and must be a means and not an end; that its true value is measured by what we do with it — by whether it lifts us or lowers us in the great world of intangibles, the world not of material but of spiritual values.

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# THE SCOUT'S STORY

## FROM THE JOURNAL OF A CATTLEMAN

BY J. F. TRIPLETT

[In the land that teems with the daring spirit of the adventurer, the last frontier State of the Union, there are yet alive many first settlers. It is, then, still a land of the pioneer age. When we listen for an hour to one of these courageous Westerners as he recalls the early days, we are caught in the romantic atmosphere of the forty-niner and the early emigrant from the States. We hasten to record the human achievements of wresting a living from a seemingly barren waste land among hostile Indians and renegades, before such achievements are forever lost to humanity. In this effort, the story we quote came to light and has been deciphered from a torn, yellow-with-age, blurred manuscript.

Mr. J. F. Triplett was a true pioneer; he was born in Kentucky, crossed the plains and the mountains in '57, was a cattleman, journalist, vigilante — also a lover of books. He continually faced personal dangers and risks that would make an ordinary man shudder. He died in Elko, Nevada, in 1921.

— Etta Jean Craig]

*May* 1, 1862. — Left Carson City at twelve o'clock, noon, bound for the sink of the Carson River, for the Truckee and Humboldt Rivers, and for such other portions of this ill-begotten, God-forsaken, sagebrush, alkali, sand, lice, and mosquito country, as used to be set down on the map when I was a boy as unexplored regions. Our party consists of nine men, but we expect to join a dozen or more men at Ragtown. We are all well armed and well mounted, and are supplied with provisions for a month's campaign. The object of the expedition is to collect a large band of cattle and to recover, if possible, from the Pah-Ute Indians a number of horses and cattle which were stolen by Mr. Lo and his dirty-faced braves during the past winter. The stock is owned by residents of Carson, Washoe, Eagle, and Lake Valley, and was driven to the low countries in the fall of 1861 for winter pasturage.

We traveled thirty miles this afternoon and are encamped at the foot of Susan's Bluffs, a high cliff of rocks named by myself, in 1858, in honor of a young lady, a former resident of Clarksville, California. She once gave me a very amusing description of her trip across the plains, and mentioned particularly the falling of her horse at this precise locality; her horse may have fallen here, but it is my opinion that she 'fell' a long time before she reached this place. All except myself are asleep; I am sitting near the camp fire, writing notes that may never do me any good, for if Mr. Indian gets my scalp he 'll be sure to make gun wads or a bonfire of this book; but I am too much of a night owl to go to bed early. Here I am on my way into the heart of a country known to be inhabited by hostile



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Indians; all for the paltry sum of ten dollars a day — and why? Because I have the misfortune to be broke. Well, I reckon a broke man might just as well have his scalp taken as not, and it matters but little to me whether mine is taken or left, so they don't leave life in the worthless carcass, for I would not like to be sailing around bald-headed for the want of a scalp.

*May* 4. — Left Susan's Bluffs at 8 A.M., passed Fort Churchill, had to halt and let the Bluecoats satisfy themselves that we were cow-hunters instead of a band of Rebs going back to the States. If we had not had a well-known cattle-owner in our crowd, I reckon Major McDermit would have stopped us, because of my being in the crowd. Crossed the ten-mile desert and camped for dinner at the old Honey Lake Smith Station; it was at this station that the first massacre of the whites by the Indians, in 1860, occurred. All know the gloom that was cast over the whole community by the disastrous result of the expedition under Major Ormsby, who went out to chastise the Indians (or to steal their horses), for the simple reason that the Indians killed three or four white men at this place. Major Ormsby was killed, so also were sixty of his men, and the balance, one hundred and forty in number, were so badly frightened that they will never want any more Indians. Another party of seven hundred under Colonel Jack Hays went out, myself among the number (see notes of 1860). After noon drove twenty miles, camped at Cottonwood Slough.

*May* 5. — Drove six miles to Ragtown. In the early days of the emigration across the plains this was quite a noted place; had several hundred inhabitants, composed of thieves, gamblers, and traders, all assembled here to rob the poor emigrant. 'T is here that the road leaves the desert so well known as the forty-mile desert — forty miles of sand, ankle-deep. From the sink of the Humboldt to Carson River clear waters and beautiful meadows. What a change in a few years! Then a perfect hurra-town, now only one inhabitant, Asa Kenyon — a regular Robinson Crusoe, as far as being monarch of all he surveys is concerned, and as ready to rob a pilgrim or 49'er as any of his predecessors were. Came up with the balance of our party; we now number twenty-three.

*May* 6. — Remained in camp all day repairing saddles and getting ready for an early start to-morrow. Elected J. B. Winters captain, he being the largest cattle-owner present. All hands jubilant that they are going to have a good time, but they don't know the country; Hell is an ice house to some of the places they 'll see before a week passes.

*May* 7. — Captain Winters may know what he is going to do, but d——d if I believe he understands the cattle business. We will be off in ten minutes.

*May* 8. — Accomplished nothing.

*May* 9. — Worse than yesterday.

*May* 10. — Repetition of the ninth.

*May* 11. — Camped at Hot Springs.

*May* 12. — Only one horse left in camp; balance gone to hunt *cold* water. One man gone to hunt horses. Boys beginning to find that the sun can shine hot. One small wagon for twenty-two men to crawl under to get in shade; no tents, no willows, no sticks to stretch a blanket over, not even sagebrush. Hot, hotter, d——d hot. Oh, Laz'rus, put your finger into the cup and let one drop of cold water fall upon my parched tongue. Nar' a drop. Man returned with horses. Reckon every man will sleep with rope in his hand.

*May* 13. — Left Hot Springs. Glad to leave. Hell may be hotter than that camp, but some of our boys can't be made to believe it. Camped at a cold

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spring high up on the side of the mountains; don't know why we are up here, unless to keep out of the way of cattle. Seven days out, horses getting tired, men discouraged, and have not seen a cow's track.

*May* 14. — Left camp at sunrise. Discovered signs of cattle at about ten o'clock. Came in sight of a herd of about fifty head about twelve. Gave them a big race, or at least the captain and some of the men did, and did not get a hoof. I did not go into the race, as I was satisfied from the orders given that we had better save our horses, as we would have the run for nothing. I think I could have taken the men and secured every animal that we sighted to-day, but, as the captain gave me a big snub the first day out for offering a suggestion, I concluded to say nothing.

*May* 15. — Had a little better luck to-day. I caught a six-month calf belonging to our captain, and we killed it and will eat it. Am doing a big business. Been out from Carson thirteen days: thirteen times ten makes 130. Making money for myself, but it's rough on my employers. Think they'd better come down and discharge me.

*May* 16. — Started from the edge of Whiteplains. Traveled in an easterly direction; does n't seem like our leader is trying to find anything. Think I 'll desert and go back to Carson and report to my employers that they don't owe me a cent — that the knowledge gained under the able leadership of Captain Winters will amply recompense me for the time I 've put in.

*May* 17. — We are camped on Carson River four miles from our starting-point. Have not secured cattle enough to supply us with beef. All hands mad and some of them talk pretty plain; I have nothing to say, as I expect to start to Carson to-morrow.

*May* 18. — I left camp alone this morning and moved up to Ragtown. Stopped to have a chat with the proprietor, as up rode a messenger in haste, requesting me to wait for the company. They had broke Captain Winters of his command, and wanted me to take charge of the expedition and make another effort, as all had cattle out and were anxious to get them. I concluded to wait and see what could be done. Ex-Captain Winters apologized for snubbing me; said he knew nothing of the management of cattle, or of their habits, and so forth. I am boss now and to-morrow we start out to try our luck again. There has been a good deal of growling and grumbling among the men, and at my suggestion the company has elected Jim Benton as chief growler. No other man will be allowed to grumble at anything. No matter what his grievance may be, he is not to grumble about it, but must refer it to the chief, whose duty it shall be to do all the growling that may be needed.

*May* 19. — Left Ragtown at 8 A.M. Traveled northwest through the sage-brush, across one corner of the forty-mile desert; passed the grave of poor Bob Ridley, who was killed by Indians in the Ormsby massacre two years ago. Arrived at the Truckee River at 4 P.M. Are encamped on one edge of the battleground, where the volunteers under Hays gave the Indians the first whipping they ever got.

*May* 20. — Traveled down the Truckee and are encamped for the night in what is called 'the orchard,' a beautiful valley, covered with a magnificent growth of cottonwood trees, which, viewed from the distance of ten miles or more, reminds one of an old-fashioned Eastern apple-orchard — hence its name. Cattle signs.

*May* 21. — Started at 8.30 A.M. Traveled down the Truckee River to the foot of the 'Tombs,' a lone mountain of rock without a sign of vegetation on it, which stands where the

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waters of the Truckee divide, the main branch running west, the other running in an easterly direction. In crossing the smaller branch we upset our wagon, wasted some grub, and broke my ink bottle. An Indian once told me that the mountain referred to had 'heap holes' in it — caves, I suppose — and that they put their dead Indians in the holes, so it is called the Tombs. Followed the main branch of the river to where it empties into Pyramid Lake. The lake takes its name from the number of small light-colored islands in it, all, or nearly all, being in the form of a pyramid. The lake is about twenty-five miles long by twelve to fifteen in width; water strongly alkali, though fed by streams of fresh water. Horses tethered on sagebrush. We cook to-night with sage; either have a splendid light or are left in uncertain darkness. Sagebrush out, fire ditto; boys in bed, and I 'll go too.

*May* 22. — Traveled north twenty miles. No sign. Turned east, crossed low range of granite hills to Mud Lake, the sink of the east branch of the Truckee. Owing to the soft and miry nature of the ground, could not get our horses to the lake, so we traveled north ten miles to Lost Springs. Plenty of grub, but the springs are only 'holes in the ground,' not large enough to put a bucket in; improvised a pump by tying strings into the rim of an old wool hat (like boys string kites), then with a long pole pressed into the crown of the hat we soon raised water for ourselves and our half-famished horses. Fifty head of cattle.

*May* 23. — Left camp at seven o'clock — course north to Smoke Creek Canyon. Met a delegation of the family of Lo, who requested us to 'heap go back.' Did not like the looks of things, so accepted Mr. Indian's invitation. Returned to and camped at Lost Springs. Twenty-five more cattle.

*May* 24. — Left Lost Springs; traveled southeast to an old road used by emigrants in the early days, who entered California by the northern or Beckwith route. Found good water at the Black Rock Mountains; camped early. Found seventy-one head of cattle wilder than deer.

*May* 25 and 26. — Have put in two days 'cleaning up' Black Rock section. Are now camped on the western edge of the 'desert' at a warm sulphur spring — a villainous place. One of the boys expressed his appreciation of the place by declaiming that he could smell Hell. Ninety-eight head more.

*May* 27. — Returned to Ragtown for grub, all tired. Had a hard day, but men satisfied — have now 244 head cattle.

*May* 28. — Left three men to herd the cattle at Ragtown; started to crop what was the 'terror' to the early pilgrim — that is, the forty-mile desert. Each side of the road is white with the bones of cattle and horses that perished on the desert in crossing to California. Tons and tons of wagon-iron and chains could be gathered along the road; the emigrant, having lost so much of his stock, was unable to take his wagon through. With a spirit of pure cussedness, to be found in no one else on earth except a man crossing the plains, he would burn all of the wood of his wagons and then scatter the irons. For the first time some of our party to-day beheld the beautiful and weird effects of the mirage: small rocks, not larger than a water-bucket, two miles away looked larger than a two-story house, while mounted men at the same distance appeared to be more than one hundred feet high. Suddenly the scene changed, and the whole country ahead of us appeared to be a vast lake of clear water, very enticing to a thirsty man, but aggravating to an extreme degree when, pushing ahead for an hour or

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more, the effects of the mirage passed away and he found nothing but the burning desert sands, which would cook an egg in five minutes. Reached the Humboldt Slough at four o'clock, tired and thirsty. Plenty of water of a poor quality; no grass. Station-keeper says there is grass five miles distant. Hired him to drive our horses thither. No wood visible, yet in the thousand sand-hills adjacent I know we will find all the fuel we require. These sand-hills are of all sizes, from two feet to one hundred feet in diameter, and by digging into them a short distance we uncover a tangled mat of roots from one-half inch to two inches through, which we find to be perfectly dry, and to make excellent fuel — that is, if a fellow hurries his cakes. There is no sign of vegetation on or around these sand-hills, yet they are full of roots. I suppose the changeable winds cover the shoots with sand as fast as they appear above the surface.

*May* 29. — Station-keeper brought in the horses — reckon from their looks that they had to dig into the sand-hills for all they got to eat. Crossed slough nearly one mile wide. Ferried men, saddles, and wagon; had to swim horses. Traveled thirty-five miles up the river and encamped at old Bannock Station. The emigrants used to tell me about seeing the elephants as they were coming down the Humboldt; I wonder if we will see anything of the animals as we go up. Hope they won't be in the shape of dirty-faced Piutes. Found to-day fifty-one head of cattle.

*May* 30. — Still on the move upward. A dreary-looking country; some grass along the sink of the river. Indian signal fires on the top of every mountain. Don't apprehend any immediate trouble, as I can read the signals as well as Mr. Lo. They telegraph our number and the direction we are traveling. Whenever they signal each other to gather in, 'I 'll call the turn' and it shall be: turn back. The wagon-road has been badly washed by storms and cloud-bursts. Had some difficulty getting wagon along; kept men scattered in hills; found twenty-six head cattle.

*May* 31. — Rolled out early, working hard all day. Wagons made thirty-five-mile drive; found thirty-two head cattle early in the day. No sign of cattle in afternoon. Met old mountaineer, who told me, 'No cattle above.' I believe he told me the truth; will go to-morrow and prove or disprove his words.

*June* 1. — Left wagon in camp, also three herders. Made a tremendous circuit; found the old mountaineer to be entitled to credit for veracity. Saw one dilapidated, superannuated savage; he might have been a warrior sixty years ago, but at present he is but an imbecile heap of breechcloth and filth.

*June* 2. — Turned back without being warned to do so; made late arrival; have to hold cattle under guard.

*June* 3. — Drove to Humboldt Slough, crossed cattle and horses, drove five miles up slough where station-keeper herded our horses on up-trip. Nothing but white sage for horses.

*June* 4. — An old savage came to camp to beg bread; says there is water in the mountain opposite our camp and 'heap cow, heap bungo (horse).' Wallowed through mud and water across the slough; found forty-eight head of big fat lazy cattle and six pretty wild horses. Distance from slough to spring estimated fifteen miles. Think that the cattle and horses were driven into the mountain by the station-keeper so that he could get away with them. Returned to camp — double guard to-night from those who laid off to-day. Caught and tied up three of the horses; found they proved perfectly gentle as soon as caught. Out of bread.

*June* 5. — Started in a southerly direction across the forty-mile desert,



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as near as we can tell about parallel with the emigrant road. Fifteen miles out fresh signs of cattle. Followed about five miles; found a number of pools of water in the middle of the desert, a good many cattle grazing in sight. The pools of water are at no point more than ten miles from the emigrant road; could the weary pilgrim of early days have known of the presence of water so near, many thousands of dollars' worth of property might have been saved. No guard to-night. Turned loose 157 head of cattle found since leaving Ragtown.

*June* 6. — Scattered men to the east and west for a regular rodeo; rounded in the camp about two o'clock P.M. Counted cattle; have 320 head to guard to-night — 163 more than yesterday.

*June* 7. — Guarded all night with full force. To-day followed as near as we could the direction of the pools; found seventy head more.

*June* 8. — Five men to drive cattle — balance scattered out toward upper sink of Carson River. Camped five miles below Ragtown; 102 head found to-day.

*June* 9. — Sent to Ragtown and had the other herd brought down. Have no bread, but everybody jubilant, as we have 736 head of cattle under guard.

*June* 10. — Lay in camp all day; horses and men need rest.

*June* 11. — Left eight men to hold cattle; took old Simpson road eastward; traveled thirty-five miles to lower sink of Carson — splendid meadows, cattle and horses in sight.

*June* 12. — Made a drive of everything except a few of Winnemucca's braves, whom we encountered. Got sixty head of cattle, seven horses. One bronco cow hooked my horse and I shot her. Did n't hurt the horse much, but finished the cow. We cooked her calf.

*June* 13. — Crossed cattle and horses over the sink to the meadows on the east side. Got thirty-nine head of cattle.

*June* 14. — Took to the mountains with eleven men to search the country around Sand Springs, and after a hard day's work reached camp on the east side of upper sink with 172 head more cattle. No bread — no sugar — beef and coffee straight. Can scoop up all the salt we want from the ground. Ten days without bread; getting ravenous. Hard-tack would taste to us like ginger cake to a schoolboy. Bound to get all the cattle in the country, bread or no bread.

*June* 15. — Sent four men with cattle back to herd. Took balance and went south to Lone Mountain; camped in a dry camp — no cattle.

*June* 16. — Returned to old camp on upper sink; four men returned.

*June* 17. — Called for one man to go with me to Chalk Mountain Valley, the home of the notorious Buffalo Jim, a renegade Piute, well known for his antipathy to the whites and for his cleverness as an appropriator of stock belonging to the emigrants. Old Jake Wilson volunteered to accompany me. All remonstrated with me for attempting the trip. Traveled all day without water; camped dry.

*June* 18. — Were aroused this morning by the most terrible yells I ever heard, jumped up, found the yells to come from the throats of Buffalo Jim and about one hundred of his followers. Concluded I 'd struck a bad streak; told old Jake to keep close to me and put a bold face on, let his heart flutter as it might. Knew that nothing but impudence could get us out of the scrape; so took out my pipe, filled and lit it, walked up to Mr. B. Jim, offered him my hand, took from my pocket an old mining-deed and told Jim that I had brought him a paper-talk (letter) from Governor Nye. Read the deed to him word for word, and in explanation

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put such interpretation on it as I deemed the exigencies of the case required. Told the savages that Governor Nye wanted all the Indians to come to the sink of Carson in ten days for shirts, flour, blankets, and so forth. Gave myself plenty of time to get away. Asked for water, was shown it, ate a little dried beef, and lit out. Followed the mountain to the southward; camped at Mills Gate Springs, a place where two mountains come close together, leaving a pass wide enough for two wagons to run abreast.

*June* 19. — Found forty head of big cattle in charge of two Indians who claimed them as the property of Buffalo Jim. Again had recourse to my deed; gave the Indians six half-dollars, some tobacco, and my red-silk handkerchief. Started immediately on the trail for camp; drove all day. Camped at about five o'clock to let cattle and horses have something to eat. Ate a little dried beef and at dark started, and drove all night. Rested at daylight and for a couple of hours on the twentieth. Drove till noon and found a spring; stopped two hours. Thought we were near enough to camp to make a run for it if the Indians should follow; made camp at dark. Would give a steer for a loaf of bread. Old Jake is now eating his rations of beef and coffee, and as he eats he recounts our adventure in Chalk Valley. He says his 'har jest riz' when I walked up to the chief of the renegades. Well, to tell the truth, mine riz too, but don't say a word about it. I 'm captain now, and if the captain does n't *show* courage he 'll lose the respect of his men — but I 'd like to know how Jake Wilson's har riz when his head is as bare as a billiard ball.

*June* 21. — Saw dust on the road some miles distant; went out and found a party of Californians bound for the Boise Basin Mines. Got seventy-two sacks of flour and a loaf of bread — the best bread I ever tasted. Stayed in camp balance of day.

*June* 22. — Drove up south side of sink to the old 'Adobe,' an abandoned station not used since the Indian War of 1860. Found eighty-one head.

*June* 23. — Moved up opposite Ragtown and crossed the main herd over to our camp. Tried to buy flour; could n't get any. Bought five pounds of rice as a substitute. 'T is now cooking and is watched by a number of eager eyes. Found twenty-two head of cattle.

*June* 24. — Started up the lake for Carson River. Saw a few cattle on an island in the lake supposed to be about one mile from the mainland; proposed to swim to the island and get them. A Cherokee joined me. We tied undershirts around our heads and plunged in; the longest mile I ever traveled was to that island. Found six gentle work-oxen, got them on a narrow point and forced them into the water. By swimming back and forth we soon got them started to mainland. We each then mounted an ox and rode ashore. Good thing we took our shirts, or we 'd have been badly blistered. During our absence Mr. Benton was thrown from his horse and had his arm broken — simple fracture, which I set by measuring the well arm and using willow for splints.

*June* 24. — Moved up and encamped opposite old Honey Lake Smith Station; swam the river and bought five pounds of beans and a small piece of bacon. Will feast high as soon as beans cook. Twenty-nine head of cattle.

*June* 25. — Drove up and encamped opposite Fort Churchill. Found 123 head to-day. Bought sack of flour; ate half for supper. Every man pitches into the bread-baking. Frying-pan, oven, flat rocks, sticks, and all are brought into requisition for bread-baking.

*June* 26. — Crossed the river at Bucklands; drove to Miller eight miles below Dayton, wind blowing a gale.

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*June 27.* — Moved out bright and early; made the biggest drive on record, considering the number of cattle, as we have over 1300 head of cattle, not counting calves.

*June 27.* — All claimants of cattle having been notified, commenced early to assort and part out. Had a busy day, as I had to preserve order and assist in the work of parting out cattle. One man who lost a cow two years since on the summit of the Sierra Nevada thought he ought to be first to inspect this herd. I tried to persuade him that the ones who were paying for having it done should have the first say; but no, he would hear to nothing and rushed in on foot, frightening the cattle as he went. I lassoed him and led him outside the gate, for which act of courtesy he threatened to use the law on me.

Got through the day; settled with the owners who had jointly employed me to make the trip; received high praise for the success of the expedition, and no one was more profuse in his compliments than the gentleman who snubbed me.

# SEVEN CENTURIES OF CIVILIZATION

BY D. W. FISHER

## I

THE world has, as we say, come down in the world. It has been used to better things. In ancient times a spiritual life that centred in art and philosophy made the world; and in mediæval times a spiritual life that centred in religion and morality made the world. But no spiritual life of any description appears to be making the world at present. A world which was once ruled by spirit and spiritual ideas is now ruled by machinery and material ideas. A world which was once human has become unhuman. And in becoming unhuman the world has escaped from the grasp of man, and is rapidly slipping into a state of nonhuman and nonrational confusion. This is what has happened to civilization.

A spiritual activity, real even if limited in scope, made the Greek world. 'We,' says Pericles, 'are lovers of beauty yet with no extravagance, and lovers of wisdom yet without weakness.' Also the Greeks were lovers of freedom, both mental and political freedom. Their love of beauty, wisdom, and freedom made their civilization.

But the modern world, having lost the belief in spiritual life and activity, has naturally lost the belief that spiritual activity in man is the cause of civilization. A large school of modern thinkers have come to the conclusion that in all these matters biology is the real explanation. They would say that the Greeks created a superior kind of civilization because they were a biologically superior race. The modern thinker of this school, if he really thought about his theory, would tell us that Socrates was a great philosopher, or Æschylus a great dramatist, because

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he was a great and excellent biological specimen. But this seems to be a long way off from being an explanation; in fact, it seems to be nonsense.

The men of the Middle Ages carried on a kind of spiritual activity, and made it dominate the course of outward events. And when I say the men of the Middle Ages, I do not mean the men of the Dark Ages. I mean the men who lived in the strongly and even brilliantly lighted ages that unfolded in the towns of France, England, Germany, Italy, and Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

These men carried on a kind of spiritual activity; but it was different from the kind we have just discussed. The man who lived in Athens and was a free citizen probably believed in the idea of a natural, limited, and human perfection. But the man who lived in any part of mediæval Europe or belonged to any level of mediæval society believed in the idea of a supernatural, infinite, and divine perfection. In short, the man who lived in the mediæval world believed in the Christian religion. And the men of the Middle Ages believed not only in religion; they believed also in beauty, and in reason or wisdom.

And in the Middle Ages a strange thing, and yet a very natural thing, happened. The various aspects and departments of human life moved toward a natural unity and wholeness; just as in the modern world they are moving toward an unnatural separation. Spiritual life held human life together; just as in the modern world the life of material interest is splitting human life into a million disconnected fragments.

For instance, the men of the Middle Ages did not fall into the modern fallacy which says that ethics can be separated from politics. I do not mean that they were always moral in their politics; I mean that they believed that they should be moral in their politics, or, more precisely, that they believed that moral rights and duties, which in the end meant largely human rights and duties, should be reflected in all true statute law and all true government. They did not, contrary to what is sometimes said, believe that the king ruled by 'divine right.' The men of the seventeenth century invented this pleasant bit of political philosophy. In fact, the men of the thirteenth century believed very much what Mr. Cleveland believed when he announced the obvious and often discredited notion that public office is a public trust. They did not believe in the divine right of kings; they believed in the divine and moral nature of kingship, and of all political and public authority.

Again, they avoided the very grave modern fallacy which says that ethics should be kept out of economics. They would not admit that business is merely business; they held that business is a form of human activity. The practical economist of modern times holds that business is business. He generally starts from a theory of unrestricted competition, and he generally ends by converting this into a theory of unrestricted monopoly. The mediæval economists had not attained this level of thought. They started from a theory of justice. They invented, and through their civic authorities they applied, the doctrine of *justum pretium:* a just price for commodities, and a just wage for labor. In our day usurers and profiteers are showered with honors and probably sent to the Senate; in that day they were put where they belonged — namely, in the pillory. Modern men have succeeded in large measure in making themselves revolve round trade and industry. For one reason or another the men of the Middle Ages, in their local merchant-guilds and craft-

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guilds, succeeded in large measure in making trade and industry revolve round human nature and human needs.

They avoided the modern mistake of separating art from life. They were not too æsthetic to be practical, like the modern Wildes and Beardsleys, and they were not too practical to be æsthetic, like the modern Babbitts. The mediæval artists created an art which could be seen by all the people all the time; not, like modern artists, an art which could be seen by some of the people some of the time. They embodied their love of beauty, as a recent writer has said, in 'everything they touched.' They embodied it in craftsmanship, in poetry, in painting, in sculpture; above all, they embodied it in the architecture of their abbeys and cathedrals, their town halls, and their towns themselves. They created an art which was new, and an art which reveals, more plainly perhaps than anything else, the life and the soul of their civilization.

These men did not make the modern mistake of separating life from philosophy. The modern man is perhaps right in denying that the mediævals were a race of scientists; he is not right in denying that they were a race of philosophers. It is quite certain that if Plato or Aristotle could have appeared in mediæval Paris he would have felt immensely more at home than he would in modern Paris, and infinitely more at home than he would feel himself in modern New York. In our day groups of millionaires build universities for any one of half a dozen utilitarian and irrelevant reasons. In the Middle Ages groups of scholars created the universities at Bologna, Paris, and Oxford for the simple reason that they believed in knowledge and wisdom.

I do not wish to leave the impression that these men created a perfect civilization. But they created a real civilization. They created a place where men lived well together, just as modern men are creating a place where men are finding it more and more impossible to live well together. The society of the Middle Ages still contained war and conflict; and it still contained differences of feudal status. But the society of that day moved toward justice, and even seemed for a while to move toward peace; and the society of that day moved more rapidly than any society before or since toward human freedom. Men were united, and believed they were united, in a single ultimate purpose, and they were united in a single society. They engaged in conflict, they permitted difference, but they were held together in an inner and essential unity. As in Greece, yet in a way totally different, man was a whole of body, mind, and spirit. And the world was a whole. It was not a perfect world. But it was a world that was moving with a great energy, and moving in what might reasonably be called the right direction.

## II

Since that day the great accident has happened to the world. It is a hard statement, but scarcely less than the truth, to say that the man of the present day has abandoned the mediæval belief in God. But that is only the beginning of what he has done. The man of the present day has also abandoned the Greek belief in reason. And following on this the man of the present day has quite naturally abandoned the belief in man himself. The old deists of the eighteenth century, the men who made the American Revolution and also the French Revolution, could believe in man, and in the rights of man, resting on nature and reason. The man of the present day does not believe in man, much less in the rights of man, because he does not believe in God, or

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even in reason. In short, the man of the present day has abandoned the ideas that created European civilization.

The central point is, perhaps, the deplorable fact that the modern man has ceased to be human. This, according to an idea that originated with Aristotle, should mean that he has ceased to be a rational animal. And there is plenty of evidence that he has ceased to be rational. We need look no further than modern warfare.

The ancients carried on a great many wars, and the mediævals carried on a great many wars. But no modern pacifist would deny the obvious fact that they usually fought because they wanted to fight. The most remarkable thing about the modern man is that he fights without wanting to fight. He does not fight from any simple human necessity; he fights from a vague unhuman necessity. He fights because the machinery of modern trade and industry compels him to fight. The old wars at least issued in a rough and human construction; the next war promises to issue in nothing but an unhuman destruction. The modern man fights against all right reason; he fights from wrong economic reason, supplemented by herd and national instinct.

And for similar evidence we need only turn to modern class or industrial warfare. Again, a struggle between the classes is nothing new in human history. But the old struggle between the classes was something different. The old struggle was usually prosecuted on the basis of some agreement. It was generally carried on under the shadow of some common conception, some symbol of a common history, or of a common belief in God or reason. The new class-struggle is prosecuted on the basis of a universal disagreement. It is carried on under the shadow of the modern belief that man is an economic animal, and therefore an animal moved by self-interest, or at most by class interest. Within these premises the modern masses have very naturally and logically worked out the modern brand of doctrine called, rather vaguely, Bolshevism. And the opposing classes have not been behindhand. They have worked out an equally modern and materialistic brand of doctrine called in different languages Fascism, the White Terror, or Onehundredpercentism. And the modern class-war is fought out on this basis. Both parties believe in force: physical force, economic force, mental force, known as propaganda. They believe in anything but the force of reason. They both desire, consciously or unconsciously, to capture the modern State, which in its remote origin in the Middle Ages was in some sense a moral and human structure, and to convert it into a vast industrial structure, perhaps to be plundered by the few, perhaps to be served by the many under external compulsion.

The modern man has given a new turn to an old struggle, and he has given it a wholly destructive turn. He has given it a turn which destroys the whole fabric of social existence. In the modern industrial war the modern man fights against all right reason and spirit; he fights from wrong economic reason, supplemented by an overpowering instinct of plunder.

But the modern man has not only ceased to be rational; viewed in a certain light, he has ceased to be an animal. He has not only become a nonrational animal; what is perhaps worse is the fact that he has in certain ways become a nonrational machine.

He has become a part of the machinery of modern industry. That is quite obvious. The modern man has first been deprived of the ancient belief that he is a centre of inner freedom; and then, under modern industry, he has been deprived of his freedom. He has

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first been deprived of the ancient belief that he is a spiritual and rational creature, and therefore an end in himself; and then, under modern industry, he has been employed more and more as a means to the ends of other people, which take the practical forms of power and money. The modern man has taken his place as one of the interchangeable parts of the modern industrial machine.

But the modern man is also a part of the machinery of public opinion. I cannot hope to exhaust this mysterious subject. So far as America is concerned, we here come upon the strange fact of modern Puritanism. It might seem that the Puritan is an idealist; but of course the modern Puritan is mainly a materialist, and only partly a vague and impotent idealist. The old Puritan, at least the old English Puritan, wished to regulate human nature and opinion because he was a clear and intelligent idealist; though we might think him a highly debatable sort of idealist. The new American Puritan regulates human nature and opinion because he is a materialist depressed by the fact of materialism. He feels in his own mind the strain generated by the impact of a vague and ineffective idealism against the weight of present-day materialism; and he endeavors to relieve this strain by going in for the radical regulation of human nature and opinion, by force of legal enactment or, if necessary, mob violence.

The thing that has happened to the modern man is well illustrated by the two political conventions recently held in this country. At Cleveland the present-day American appeared in one rôle; at New York he appeared in another. At Cleveland he appeared as a nonrational automaton; this is the modern man who fits into the machinery of industry and public opinion. At New York he appeared as a nonrational maniac; this is the modern man who runs amuck in war between the nations and war within the nations. Perhaps the same men did not attend both conventions. But in modern life it is frequently one and the same man who performs in these two rôles. The modern man appears to be a strange mixture of nonrational animal and nonrational machine.

## III

The bedevilment of modern man and of modern civilization is obviously the work in large part of science and industrialism. The worst feature of science is that it fills the head of the modern man with essentially unimportant things, and then drives out of his head essentially important things. Science fills the head of the modern man with the notion that nature is something material and mechanical, and then it drives out of his head the vastly more important notion that man himself is something rational and spiritual. The scientist of the present day has invented a better idea of nature than anyone could have invented in the days of Aquinas; and then he has invented a worse idea of man than almost anyone would have thought of entertaining in the days of Aquinas, or even of Aristotle.

I say 'the scientist.' Of course the man who does this is the man who converts science into philosophy; he may or may not be a scientist. In any case the scientist has filled the modern atmosphere with the idea of matter and machinery; and generally speaking the modern man has converted this idea with great avidity into an ultimate philosophy. Thus the modern man has acquired a specious, or at least an unimportant, science; and he has lost a real and important science. He now knows how to regulate nature; but he

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does not know how to regulate himself or his civilization.

All of this is grist for the industrial mill. I do not say that the Devil arranged it; but he could hardly have arranged the thing more perfectly. The modern industrialist finds everything ready to hand. He is pleased that man knows so much about nature; and he is equally pleased that man knows so little about himself. He can get the few men he needs who know how to regulate nature; and he can get the vast multitude of men he needs who do not know how to regulate themselves. The less they know about that the better. The industrialist need not bother with beings who concern themselves with their rights as rational animals; he can deal, and deal much more conveniently, with beings who concern themselves with their duties as nonrational automata. Under the reign of modern materialism his problem is simplified; and it grows simpler every day. The industrial mill takes all those foolish beings who think they are rational animals and grinds them into line, or out of existence. Science and industrialism, the latter rather more directly and deliberately, work together to invalidate the ancient notion that man is a rational creature, capable of creating a human and rational civilization.

In view of this broad fact, it can hardly be said that the modern man has registered any very substantial achievement. He may imagine that he has achieved what he calls freedom. The obvious fact is that the modern man, especially in America, has been losing in recent years the legal rights which his forbears wrote into the various bills and declarations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But I do not limit the discussion of this point to the level of written charters and enactments. The fundamental fact lies elsewhere. Let us cheerfully admit that the modern man still retains some of the outer machinery of right which he acquired through the English, the American, and the French Revolutions. The fundamental fact is that he has lost the inner substance of right and freedom, and has lost it mainly through the industrial revolution.

He has, let us admit, freedom of action; but under modern materialism he has no end or goal of action. He has all the material conditions of life, and he still has many of the legal conditions of life; the only thing he does not have is life itself. His freedom, where he still retains it, is a false freedom. It enables him to go nowhere.

Speaking of him very broadly, the modern man is, as we say, unbalanced. He has lost his balance. The normal man keeps up a very delicate balance; for he retains contact with the inner and spiritual centre of his own being, while he moves outward at the same time toward the material component of himself, and of the external universe. But the modern man does not maintain this delicate balance and order; for he loses contact with the centre of his own being, and only moves outward toward the material part of himself, and the material part of the external universe. He rushes outward in a mad desire to possess the world; and he loses his grip on the world, after having first lost his grip on himself. He loses belief in the spiritual and rational life which should properly lie within himself, and then he loses control of the political and social life which obviously lies outside himself. Thus man devotes himself to matter, and ceases to dominate life and civilization.

Whether the damage that has been done may yet be repaired is another question.

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# THE EAGER WING

BY JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE

I WOULD not cage you more than does the tree
The bird. I felt your eager wing
Beat on my heart in that first day of Spring
When out of all the many you chose me
And sang and built and always seemed to be
At home. I said, here is a thing
Of alien rapture — let it nest and sing
Until it shall be off again and free.

And now it is September and I know
How quick you are to seek the upper air;
I do release you and I watch you go,
But oh, you are so mortal climbing there
Above my shelter, and the wind so strong,
The ways so many and the flight so long!

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# GYPSY BLOOD

BY HARRY B. SMITH

'A JUDICIOUS selection of one's parents,' says the Japanese philosopher, Ohara, 'is the first important step in life.' His name, as well as the paradoxical character of many of the aphorisms of this sage, betrays the Milesian strain in his otherwise pure samurai blood.

It were presumptuous in me to attempt an analysis of the epigrams of Ohara. His delicate nuances doubtless elude the full appreciation of one to whom his language is but a late and laborious acquirement. It happened that in turning for the hundredth time the rice-paper pages of my well-worn copy of his *Book of Ten Thousand Half-Truths* I encountered the pearl of Oharian wisdom which seemed for my purpose both text and moral.

In the Decalogue's decree that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, there is more injustice than the manifest unfairness of chastising the innocent; for no mention is made of the sins of the mothers. Yet Moses, the editor, is conceded to have been a clever man and, if credence is to be given to a tradition regarding bulrushes and a royal princess, he was familiar from infancy with the caprices and indiscretions of young women in the highest society of his time. That Moses was ignorant of modern science is no reproach to the memory of an able man and a conscientious editor; but observation should have taught him that the maternal misdemeanors have the dominating influence. If the original material mentioned only the sins of the fathers, while he may have had scruples against altering the text, the matter was certainly worthy of a footnote.

## I

This is the story of one who was the innocent victim of heredity, unfortunate in his choice of the authors of his being. His birth superimposed upon a previously immaculate escutcheon that bar sinister which in heraldry is the base of a triangle. His mother and his putative father were both Parisian aristocrats of the old noblesse. Kings and the fair rulers of kings had prized their friendship and praised their fidelity; but somewhere in the heart of his handsome mother had been a spark of the roving spirit, a lurking trace of nomad blood, her inheritance from some errant belle of her race. It was this gypsy strain, this impulse to go a-roaming by the light of the moon, that impelled her son to his downfall and caused the untimely end of a career of promise.

Trifles decide our destinies. The supposed grace of God, but for which John Wesley thought he might have been the man in the gutter, may be merely a blood corpuscle more or less, the development of an atom evolved in pangenesis. It was this infinitesimal tilting of the physiological scale which barred Michael Bruno from the high estate, the fair environment of his ancestors. A life of idleness and luxury had been their prerogative for



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generations. Liveried lackeys had driven them through the streets of Paris, and they had looked with disdain upon the plebeians wistful with envy or fierce-eyed with resentment.

To the casual observer, Michael had the family good looks; but unhappily the roof of his mouth was not so black as it should have been, and by connoisseurs, learned in such matters, certain defects — scarcely noticeable — were imputed to his legs and tail. His first custodian pursued the policy of honesty, whose results are said by optimists to be eventually satisfactory, and would do nothing to impair the confidence of a valued clientele. Instead of falsely representing Mike to be of unimpeachable lineage and establishing him as a pampered minion of the boudoir, a sale at a reasonable price to the Great Bruno was willingly consummated. This was the identical Great Bruno whose company of strolling players has so long delighted the patrons of the entertainment described by its sponsors as 'polite vaudeville.' Indeed, dramatic criticism has frequently eulogized the acting of Bruno's Dogs with an enthusiasm generally reserved for human histrions from remote regions, acclaimed as great because not understood.

When Mike was admitted to the Great Bruno's company — or, to be accurate, to the conservatoire in which pupils were developed into *sociétaires* — he was something less than a foot of curly black wool, from one end of which alert and restless brown eyes blinked upon a world in which sleep and play agreeably alternated. His juniority extended through the greater part of a theatrical season, during which he was a mere neophyte in the Temple of Thespis. The Great Bruno only casually recognized his existence; but Mike was the special protégé of the even greater Mrs. Bruno, who carried him wrapped in a shawl, smuggling him into day coaches and sleeping-cars, while the regular troopers traveled in baggage cars to which they were carried in their boxes. The weekly migrations were always accompanied by a frenzied yelping and barking, doubtless in protest against such unseemly treatment of artists, or, it may be, expressing those petty jealousies which are inevitable in a profession whose members are proverbially temperamental.

From Mrs. Bruno, — 'Mlle. Leroy' on the programmes, — as head of the informal preparatory school, Mike received his rudimentary education and became well grounded in the primary curriculum: such elementary branches as sitting up, rolling over, and jumping through a circle formed for the purpose by Mademoiselle's stout and motherly arms. These simple lessons led to more difficult studies: balancing a lump of sugar on one's nose and waiting patiently for the announcement that breakfast was ready; or 'listening for the Indians,' a feat which consisted of putting an ear to the ground and holding it there till Mrs. Bruno gave utterance to her own exclusive idea of a war whoop.

These talents seemed pleasant to acquire under genial tutelage, the lessons being informal during the afternoon and evening performances, when the Great Bruno was on the stage directing his company. Mrs. Bruno had much leisure, as she appeared only once in each session, merely to impart feminine interest and charm by her pink tights, yellow wig, and long blue earrings. Frequently she would stand in the wings, holding Mike in her arms, while he watched with fascinated gaze and audible panting the strange scenes enacted by his elders. It was in these great moments that the

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glories of art were revealed to him, and there awakened within him an eager and restless ambition.

It appeared then that dogs, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Bruno, could wear clothes, little skirts and jackets, trousers and tailed coats, hats of many varieties, some plain, others adorned with ribbons, feathers, and flowers; and it was demonstrated that with practice a dog could carry a fan or an umbrella. Wide-eyed amazement and uncontrollable barks of surprise followed the revelation that an advanced dog walked on two legs nearly as well as on four; that creatures of his kind even had bad habits, like human beings. There was an Irish terrier of clownish countenance, who twice a day was seen going through the swinging doors of a small house, presently emerging and staggering to an adjacent little lamp-post. There he was taken in charge by Flip, the white bull-terrier, in a helmet and a blue coat, with a club under his foreleg, hopping on with all the dignity that a hop can display. Twice a day Mike saw this same little house with smoke and a red glare at its windows, and then, while bells rang and gongs clanged, a wagon was drawn on by two collies, other members of the company riding, wearing bright tin hats. In an upper window Tiny the Maltese appeared, and Flip, now in a scarlet coat instead of a blue one, ran up the ladder and carried her down by the nape of her neck. After this came the grand finale, in which there was always a tumult of barking and much joyful gamboling around the Great Bruno, all snapping for the lumps of sugar, of which the supply was never equal to the demand. Then Mrs. Bruno would trip out to participate in the triumph, bowing and smiling, taking as much of the applause as if she, instead of the greyhound, had done the flying leap over two chairs placed a long distance apart.

The precise relation to life and the cosmos of these strange pranks of his elders Mike could not understand, nor why the fantastic exhibition was always followed by the loud noise of a number of human beings slapping their forepaws together. Nevertheless it was very amusing and, watching from behind a canvas tree, he never could see it without an irrepressible desire to burst out barking, which caused him to be gently spatted into silence by Mrs. Bruno. Soon, however, he realized that all this work, or play, whichever it might be, was necessary if dogs expected to eat. Each performer, after his own achievement, received a small edible honorarium, and following every afternoon performance a substantial repast was served. These memorably enjoyable occasions were often marred by the piteous wailing in outer darkness of some unfortunate brother who, for failure in his specialty or for general dereliction in his professional duty, was paying the penalty of hunger. Evidently the world was governed by an inexorable law that if a dog would not work, or even if with willing heart he tried his best and failed, it was not for him to share in the rewards of industry and good luck.

Naturally Mike had no knowledge of the idle rich. Only by atavistic subconscious memories of the life of his aristocratic forbears did he dream that somewhere there might be sluggards of his race surfeited with luxury and immune from effort. It was obvious that, in the law of causation, food followed the faithful performance of certain duties, each getting a share according to his talent and diligence. His own modest efforts were always thus rewarded by Mrs. Bruno, and consequently, when inclined to hunger, he would approach his protectress, sit up and beg; and if that failed he would offer other exhibitions of his simple

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artistry, following each by an appealing look or a gentle vocal hint which rarely failed to bring satisfactory results.

In the absence of Mrs. Bruno, sometimes he would try these tactics upon friendly strangers. His first experiment of the kind was essayed when he wandered into the parlor of a hotel, where he was noticed by several elderly ladies who were playing cards, and he was lured to sociability by the offer of a piece of candy whose only defect was its small size. The gift seeming but a promise of favors to come, 'more' was suggested by Mike's sitting up and playing the mendicant. As the lady had returned to her cards, she did not even see him. After a patient holding of his pose, he decided that the appeal was inadequate. 'Something else may interest her,' he thought, and tried rolling over; but an argument about the game was in progress and he was ignored. Saying his prayers and listening for the Indians were then exploited, with brief intervals for expected recognition, and when his particular elderly lady's attention was again turned in his direction Mike was rapidly performing his entire repertoire, finishing with a staccato bark, by which he meant to say: 'Surely, madam, any one of these clever performances is worthy of recompense. If you think otherwise, kindly observe their overwhelming effect in the aggregate.' Naturally his reflections did not take this elaborate form, but the idea was there. More simply expressed, his brief remark signified: 'I 've done my best. Now true merit should be rewarded.'

From gossip heard in the company he understood that there were social spheres in which it was not necessary to earn one's own board and lodging by talent and hard work; but he was certain that such an existence would be distasteful to him. A career, a desire for knowledge, to be like the successful comrades who had risen in their profession, applauded by men, women, and children; to have one's conscientious efforts rewarded by palatable morsels — these were the things that made life worth while. And so ambition stirred within him, zeal to outgrow an idle puppyhood and to enter the great arena of canine action.

On a day when the Bruno company was in the midst of an engagement in a large city, between the afternoon and the evening performances Mrs. Bruno took Mike for a walk along a wide handsome avenue, where the sidewalks were crowded with well-dressed men and women and the roadway filled with resplendent motor-cars. On the front seat of one of these cars Mike saw, seated in dignity and pride, a black French poodle, one of his own tribe and race, surveying the jostling throng with the serene contempt of a Marquise for a sans-culotte rabble. Happening to catch sight of Mike led by his leash, the aristocratic stranger displayed an excitement so rare and extraordinary that her mistress, a dowager of several chins, expressed solicitude, fear that something was wrong with Zizi. 'Why is she acting that way?' she asked the chauffeur.

Mike, from the pavement's edge, gazed at the haughty patrician with a curiosity inexplicable to himself. And this interest manifested by Madame la Marquise? Was it but the natural camaraderie that two of the same breed and race feel intuitively, never wholly repressed even in the most arrogant noblesse? Or was there in the mind of Madame la Marquise some glimmering of the truth, some telepathic message saying: 'Behold thine Ishmael! But for thy waywardness, he might be beside thee on silken cushions who is now but a vagabond.' If she heard any such voice of the maternal instinct, she

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calmed herself by an effort, passed, and gave no sign. Better that a liaison repented should remain her secret than that, in a moment of plebeian emotion, she should impair her social standing. After all, the child seemed well cared for.

And for him was there no mysterious whisper to his subconscious self, saying 'Yon proud beauty is the mother who bore you'? Strict devotion to veracity compels the chronicler to state his belief that there was nothing of the kind.

For five months Mike led the life of a strolling player, traveling from town to town, one stage much like another, each dressing-room the counterpart of its predecessors, his box in the property room to sleep in; the rides to the railway stations, wrapped in Mrs. Bruno's shawl; the swiftly moving panorama seen from the train windows; another town, and the routine of theatre and hotel over again. Life seemed lacking in variety, but redeemed by the interest and adventure of art. To the inquisitive mind, avid of new sensations, there were always novel episodes in the daily round that relieved the monotony and made life worth while. Quarrels there were, as in all companies of show folk, petty jealousies of each other and of the favors of the manager; but the artistic temperament, if sensitive and quick to take offense, is easily conciliated, and the wagging tail of apology was rarely offered in vain.

It is inherent in the histrionic nature to feel that one's own talents are not accepted by the world at their full value, that the praise lavished upon one's fellows is hardly warranted by their talents. The members of the Bruno organization, like all imperfect canine beings, had the defects of their qualities. Gossip and detraction were not unknown. While one of them was performing, his comrades sitting about and awaiting their turns would look at each other and yawn, rather bored, intimating: 'Nice chap! I 'm really very fond of him. But whoever told him he could act? Just wait a minute and I 'll show you the difference.' But when the criticized performer finished his scene and came trotting to his bench, censure changed to geniality that implied 'Good for you, old boy! You never acted better.' Thus was maintained the superficial good-fellowship characteristic of the profession, though each knew who would be the real star of the company if there were any justice in the world.

## II

Five months of the mountebank life, and then, just as it began to pall and become a trifle monotonous, something unusual happened. The older troopers seemed to realize its significance, for one night, after the final performance in a small town, the barking and yapping were louder and more prolonged than Mike had yet heard at the conclusion of an engagement. It seemed to sound a note of joyous anticipation. To his whimpered interrogation, Flip, the white bull-terrier, a veteran actor of the old school, gaped to the full extent of his pink-lined maw and patronizingly communicated the fact that it was the end of the season. This conveyed no meaning to the novice and his interrogative whine asked for more definite information; but Flip, being a bit morose, — his Policeman had not gone so well that evening, — only growled grumblingly, intimating that he had never met a young amateur so persistent in asking questions, adding: 'Wait and see for yourself.'

Mike was left to wonder and imagine. He was carried by Mrs. Bruno to the train and smuggled into a sleeping-car.

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The troopers, each in his slatted box, barking in every tone in the canine vocal gamut, were taken to the baggage car. The railway journey seemed exactly like its predecessors, though somewhat longer; but the end, how different! Instead of arriving at a vast and crowded station filled with smoke and terrifying noises, the train stopped at a showy little wooden building in the midst of a world unlike any that Mike had ever seen, and he stared at his comrades with a wild surmise, as a great explorer had done in somewhat similar circumstances. There were many houses, but far apart, with wide spaces between filled with bright-colored growing things, not unlike those that he occasionally had seen Mrs. Bruno buy in order that they might be handed to her over the foot-lights. Instead of muddy streets, there were tempting white roads just dusty enough to make them ideal for rolling purposes.

Could this be the same world? No crowds; no hurrying across streets, dodging cars with their clanging gongs; no rasping warnings from murderous motors; no frightening roar; all clean and sunlit. Alluring were the white pavements bordered by some strange green substance. 'Grass, you little fool,' Flip sniffed in answer to his question about this. The very air seemed different, pleasant to pant in. At the first revelation of it all, the Wanderlust seized upon his soul, even as it had upon the soul of Madame la Marquise in her momentous revolt against conventionality. There was a vague unrest in Michael Bruno's youthful mind as he viewed the great open spaces where dogs are dogs. To pervert the poet slightly, it was as if a new planet swam into his kennel.

The strollers were transferred to a large yellow wagon with two horses, driven by a friendly man with whiskers on his chin, greeted by the members of the company as an old friend. The Great Bruno, Mrs. Bruno, and Mike, with Flip as a privileged veteran, entered a small black car something like the taxis of cities, but with no roof, open to the air. They drove over white roads, through expanses of green and sunshine, till they arrived at a big white house, whereupon the mummers in the trailing wagon shouted a chorus of joy by which it was proclaimed that this was what they called Home.

During the summer that followed, Mike agreed with the opinion of Doctor Pangloss that 'all is for the best in this best of possible worlds.' All seemed designed for canine comfort and happiness, bounteous Nature not only providing every necessity, but affording facilities for the indulgence of whims and caprices. In an environment restricted to hotels, trains, and railway stations, who would have imagined that there were fussy feathered creatures on two legs whose clucking and aimless pecking at the ground one might interrupt by chasing and scattering them shrieking till out of reach, when they would cluster, wild-eyed, cackling their indignant protest? Yet who could have known that against this harmless game there were laws enforced by a switch? New zest was imparted to life by the discovery of the barnyard cat, whose prompt acceptance of battle converted many a gallant assault into an abrupt halt, doubtful reconnaissance, and a contemptuous decision to leave the marauding wretch to his conscience. Still the charging part was always good sport, even if it ended in the better part of valor.

In this Arcadia the members of the company were accustomed to spend their summers, resting and recreating after the cares and labors of a theatrical season, their well-earned leisure interrupted only by a brief daily lesson to

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keep them in practice. There were commodious quarters for them all; but Mike continued to be Mrs. Bruno's protégé and was admitted as a guest in the big white house, where Flip resumed his regular summer engagement as caretaker, he being a dog of versatile mind who could turn his paw to anything.

Mike had the freedom of the house, the garden, and the barn. It was satisfying for a while, yet there seemed to be so much unexplored country; and from the gate he often gazed up and down the road, wondering what region of romance lay beyond his range of vision, and he longed for adventure in that forbidden land. When he first yielded to temptation, his wanderings extended no farther than a few yards from the gate; but there came a day when, doubtfully, but with heart beating with the spirit of high emprise, he started upon a tour of investigation. On his return, hearing Mrs. Bruno's voice inquiring as to his whereabouts, he made a discreet detour to the back yard and selected a patch of sunshine in which to be found apparently sleeping. Mrs. Bruno presently discovered him and remarked that 'the little rascal was there all the time,' whereupon he blinked up at her demurely and flapped a corroborative tail — his first falsehood.

This was his initial adventure upon the open road; but the roving impulse now possessed him, the far-reaching effect of one mad maternal escapade. From that day, it was not only when the gate was left open that he followed the gypsy trail; for he found a place where a broken picket facilitated escape at will, and his absences became frequent, each hour of freedom bringing its own delightful surprises. One met agreeable acquaintances in all ranks of society, some well groomed and wearing modish collars with name-plates; others mere vagabonds, ill-conditioned but sociable. At first sight, the latter were inclined to display toward him the envious resentment of the proletariat for the aristocrat; but Mike's genial Gallic nature made him friendly and condescending. He accepted in the true Bohemian spirit the proffered invitations to luncheon, taking pot luck in the alleys where these care-free vagrants knew all the most likely pails and boxes. The fare was simple, merely the remnants of plain home cooking; but there was always an interesting element of luck in the foraging, and good humor seasoned the least promising bone. For a snack between meals it answered well enough.

With children he established immediate popularity, and in several instances narrowly escaped summary and enforced adoption. If they happened to have anything eatable, which was almost invariably the case, his sitting up and begging produced prompt results and shrill-voiced approbation. With one boy, his experience took the form of a practical joke which gave him much secret amusement, the lad undertaking to teach him some simple and familiar tricks which Mike pretended to learn with astonishing aptitude, the instructor not knowing that his supposed pupil was a professional, to whom sitting up and giving the paw were mere pup's play.

During these absences, Mrs. Bruno displayed an almost motherly anxiety, knowing his unfamiliarity with the perils of motor traffic, and Flip was usually delegated to retrieve the wanderer. The white bull-terrier was a born detective with an almost uncanny gift of olfactory deduction. Invariably the truant was found and made to trot home. As the two approached the gate where Mrs. Bruno waited, Flip always advertised his efficiency by



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seizing Mike's ear and growling a remonstrance, telling him what might happen to the young and inexperienced who ran away 'for to be'old this world so wide.' Mrs. Bruno tried to make her voice very harsh and threatening as she reprimanded him; and on one occasion she appeared with a whip in her hand, which looked dangerous, but, in the way she used it, proved to be nothing worth howling about, though he yelped a little merely to humor her.

## III

The summer came to an end just as idleness was beginning to pall; for artists cannot long remain contented away from the glare of the footlights and the music of applause. After an exciting day of preparation, Mike found himself on a train again, sitting on Mrs. Bruno's expansive lap, gazing out of the window and looking his last upon gardens and green fields. He learned from the master, with some interpretation by Flip, that henceforth he was to take an active part in the performances. He was cast for no particular rôle, but took his place with the others in the opening ensemble, in which each member of the company improvised his own part, saying and doing whatever he pleased, after the manner of a harlequinade, all capering around the Great Bruno, who alternately cracked his whip and held it to be jumped over, shouting 'Allez!' and 'Hoop-la!' while the musicians played their loudest and fastest. After the show, the master made his bows holding Mike in his arms, which was about the biggest honor a member of the company could receive, and he was proud and happy, though the fox terrier who had been featured in that manner during the preceding season snapped at him viciously on their way to the dressing-room. He learned new parts as the season progressed and was even entrusted with some of the leading comedy characters; but no success was ever so gratifying as that of his first appearance, followed by Bruno's patting approval. Young as he was, he knew enough of canine nature to be sure that he was a success when he realized his decreasing popularity in the company. The sardonic snarls of certain ill-natured veterans were frequently uttered with the deliberate intention that he should hear them.

'You 'd think he was a star, the airs he puts on,' he heard Boris, the tall Russian, remark one evening; and Spotty, the coach dog, added: 'If *he* 's an actor, *I* ought to be following a garbage wagon!'

Throughout the season Mike developed in talent and grew in favor with his manager. The esteem of the amiable and the envy of the malignant should have proved to him that he was happy. He was making a good living and must have been prosperous, for more than once he had heard Bruno tell people: 'That dog is worth a thousand dollars.' With youth, fame, and the high regard of his patrons, surely he should have been content; but the artistic temperament and the gypsy spirit were inseparable in him, his inheritance from a mother incurably romantic. The stolen hours of liberty during the past summer haunted his memory. There were times when even the triumphs of a stage career were insufficient to relieve the monotony of comparative respectability, and then he longed for that free life, for those vagabond comrades — rude and ribald, yes; but so profoundly canine.

Often, with a guilty conscience, he found himself watching the stage door and thinking how easy it would be to sneak out unnoticed, and then he would be restrained by the actor's sense of his

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duty to The Show, the feeling that the audience must not be disappointed; but when one inherits the weak will that parleys, half persuaded, the yielding is but a matter of time and opportunity.

It was during a matinée in an inland city classified theatrically as a 'three-nighter' that Bruno missed the dusky clown whose antics were a conspicuous feature of the opening ensemble. Mrs. Bruno was notified and made hurried inquiries, and after the performance there was a thorough search of the theatre and the neighborhood. Mike was nowhere to be found. Like a celebrated writer, he had learned that he could 'resist everything but temptation.' He had found his opportunity when the stage doorkeeper deserted his post to take a note to Miss Polly Dixey, popularly known as the Queen of Jazz.

Venturing furtively into the street, carefully assuming a manner that, in case of detection, would enable him to claim that he was only looking around and had no intention of leaving the theatre, Mike presently quickened his pace, and he had trotted but a short distance when he realized that the way of the transgressor is not only hard, but muddy, crowded, and perilous. Conditions improved as he progressed. It was a small city, so it was not long before he found himself in a more agreeable neighborhood, not unlike the country town of his summer adventures — streets where people lived, not like those where they merely rushed about with no apparent purpose.

'There should be good fellows here,' he thought, 'who will offer the simple hospitality of the alleys. An hour of freedom is worth a scolding, even a whipping, and anyone is apt to get lost.' In his inexperience, it never entered his mind that there were bullies and blackguards of his species, wolves in dog's clothing, whose joy is in bloodshed and savage combat; but it happened that the first animal he encountered was one of a kind wholly new to him, a huge creature, shaggy and sharp-snouted, knowing nothing apart from his breeding and training as a minion of the law. This ruffian had received a memorable mauling from an Airedale considerably under his own size and weight but filled with the fighting blood of the Irish brigade. Since the ignominy of that defeat, he had nursed a permanent grudge against all dogs smaller than himself, to which animus the sight of a *caniche* added the inbred antipathy of warring races.

In the onslaught that followed, murder was prevented only by a loose muzzle, the monster's sympathetic owner having complied with the letter of the law, though ignoring its spirit. The brute could bite, though with limitations. Cruelly maltreated, rolled in the dust, and bleeding from superficial wounds, Mike scampered from the scene of carnage as fast as his injuries permitted. Beneath the porch of an empty house he took refuge and licked his wounds. He lay there through the night, getting such sleep as wailing cats allowed him, filled with a great disgust of life always most poignant in those who realize that the gods have of pleasant sins made whips to scourge them. For Mrs. Bruno too the night was long and restless, and she found no consolation in her spouse's assurance that when a dog takes to running away there is no use in trying to do anything with him.

Morning came at last, inspiring Mrs. Bruno with a determination to go forth and search, and to the wanderer bringing only the pangs of hunger and a realization of his loneliness and misery. It is in such emergencies that one feels the handicap of culture and good breeding. A born vagrant could have foraged for himself and found enough

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to keep body and soul together; but an unpractical artist, reared in comfort, could only worry and wonder, while his excited imagination was tormented by a maddening mirage of dog-biscuit. He had sold his birthright without getting even the mess of pottage to which by precedent such bad bargainers are entitled.

His wounds received lingual treatment, and he found encouragement in the discovery that they were not deep, that his condition was due to shock and mental anguish rather than to physical injury. Unaccustomed to being his own valet, he made the best toilet he could, pondering the while on his course of action. He decided that he would try to find his way back to the theatre and meet his wronged benefactors with every expression of joy. He felt certain that he could play the repentant prodigal with convincing realism. Incidentally, on his way, he would keep careful watch for any stray morsels of food. How precious now would be the almost worthless bones of which, in the bygone summer, he had gnawed his share, mainly to avoid the reproach of snobbery from good-hearted chance acquaintances.

In appearance a typical dog that had seen better days, he trotted nervously down the street, every sense alert to discover the road by which he had come. His incidental invasion of alleys resulted in no edible treasure-trove and, as he had recklessly run away from his good dinner of the day before, he experienced a sensation new to one of hitherto well-ordered life — the pains of starvation.

It seemed to him that he had scurried a long and devious way when he beheld his first prospect of help and encouragement, a street in which many children were all traveling in the same direction toward a large building, in front of which they gathered. Experience had taught Mike that in a group of young humans there was generally one at least who could be relied upon to produce food of some sort; and he remembered the tactics by which, rather from caprice than from hunger, he had acquired a share of it. One of the groups of children presently noticed him capering around their feet with the always recognizable desire of the unfortunate to cultivate the favor of the prosperous. In the days of his vanity, when he had been well groomed, there had been no hesitation in accepting the right paw of fellowship; but now, begrimed and disheveled, he found that his offer to become a playmate was received with a humiliating lack of enthusiasm. Chagrined and mortified, he realized that the apparel oft proclaims the dog.

By the discerning few, who instinctively recognized a noble mind struggling with adversity, he was given some patronizing words; but the greater number turned the cold shoulder of indifference. In the doorway of the large building a woman appeared ringing a bell, and with that crown of sorrow that is the remembrance of happier things Mike recalled the summer days when such a bell had announced a hearty meal. The children began to move toward the big building, and he saw that prompt and energetic action must be taken. Remembering the effective use of his talents on former occasions, he began an abrupt exhibition of the tricks that had never failed. His sitting up and begging enlisted mild interest, as his motive was apparent; but when he said his prayers certain of the children lingered to approve. He listened for the Indians and then walked on his hind legs, his mouth open with a grin which sought to establish an entente cordiale. There was a responsive excitement from the spectators which developed into ex-

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clamations of surprise as he reversed his position and walked on his forelegs. His spirits rose with the evidence of success and the prospect of reward. He started to rush around in a circle, barking sharply, reproducing in monologue the grand rally which always concluded the performances of Bruno's company.

It was at this moment that Mike became conscious of the approach of a very tall man, and he stopped his running and barking to admire a blue uniform similar to that worn by Flip, the white bull-terrier, in his rôle of guardian of the peace. Officer Callahan fired at as close range as he dared and, the innocent bystanders having scattered to areas and doorways, the bullet found its billet. Mike's eyes stared an instant in astonished inquiry as to what had happened to him. His body quivered — and then he lay still, just as if he were listening for the Indians.

'You kids keep away from strange mutts,' advised Officer Callahan. 'Could n't ye see the way he acted he was mad?'

That same afternoon the Great Bruno, in his ornate velvet costume, found his spouse, with Flip beside her, outside the stage door, looking wistfully up and down the crowded street.

'For God's sake, Mabel!' he exclaimed. 'Ain't you dressed yet? You only got ten minutes.'

'All right, Tom,' she said. 'I can make it. I thought maybe he'd come back for the matinée.'

'Forget it, mother. Don't I tell you when a dog starts to running away he's no good? It's born in some of them. Look slippy, old lady, or you'll be holding up the show.'

During the afternoon performance Flip, for the first time in his career, was guilty of unprofessional conduct. While Tiny, the Maltese, was mincing across the stage carrying her parasol, the bull-terrier, with no apparent provocation, suddenly seized Spotty the coach dog by the neck and shook him till the theatre rang with dismal howls.

The master's whip separated the disturbers of the peace, and Flip, the aggressor, received most of the punishment. Unhappily, it was impossible for him to explain that he had overheard the coach dog's remark: —

'Small loss! He was n't a bad sort personally, but he sure was a rotten little actor.'

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# MRS. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER

BY GAMALIEL BRADFORD

## I

MRS. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER is known through printed material only during a few years of her life with her husband and in the most intimate connection with him. She was born in 1816, in the small town of Dracut, Massachusetts, the daughter of a physician named Hildreth. She had a passion for the drama and Shakespeare, studied for the stage and acted for a few years, then left it to marry the young lawyer of Lowell. She had a numerous family, led a busy, useful life, and died in 1876. There is no biography of her, no elaborate record coming from herself or others; but a large number of her letters from 1860 to 1865 are printed in connection with her husband's. They are letters of extraordinary brilliancy and force of self-revelation; they give a startling, varied, veracious likeness of a most original spirit.

It is best first to establish this striking couple in the normal current of happy and fortunate married life, the substantial and sympathetic sharing of common suffering and common joy. It is evident that, at any rate during the years when we know them, they were well off. There were ample means for comfortable and even luxurious living. Money was always abundant and there is no sign of the wear and tear so sure to accompany financial stringency. There was a large and beautiful house in Lowell, plenty of servants, horses and carriages, and all the equipment of a man and woman prominent in the community and able to appear so. Everywhere there is the sense of ease, of the ability and the disposition to have the external benefits that do not make happiness but go far to sustain it. In consequence home was a pleasant place, and the wife could write securely to her husband of her desire to have him return to it: 'What happiness it would be to see you coming up the avenue, even *greater*, that there would be none to greet you but me. We should not say much, happy enough to sit down together, and look on one of the loveliest views in nature, satisfied that this is home.'

And if home was happy and comfortable it was not only money, but still more her thought and gift, that made it so. It is clear that she was an admirable domestic manager, understood the elaborate art of household economy in all its developments, and knew how to make the machinery run smoothly without any evidence of machinery at all. It is delightful, when she is absent, to see the care and forethought with which she plans what is to be done at home, what is to be cared for, what may not be neglected. With the intense domestic energy of the true New England housewife, she no sooner gets into even a temporary dwelling but she takes steps to put it in order: 'I could not help putting this house in order, new carpeting the entry and stairs, and taking up the others to have them cleaned.'



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In all these things Mrs. Butler is perfectly and charmingly a woman. She is so likewise in her social instinct and all the elements that go with it. Without the least trace of vanity or coquetry, she knew that she had beauty, made suitable efforts to preserve it, and sighed for the possible loss of it. She quotes a friend's ecstasy over charms that have vanished with youth and regrets them — because her husband may: 'I lie here so pale and wearied, so unattractive, that I would fain present some bright season of life when I was looked at with pleasure and *loved*, by those who felt the inspiration of my nature.' She liked dress, too, enjoyed pretty things, and her letters have just such reference to them as is normal and proper.

She employed all these minor agencies, in combination with greater ones, to achieve social success, and it is clear that she did achieve it. Men and women liked her, because she understood them, sympathized with them, and went out of her way to do those little kindnesses that seem insignificant and yet go so far. At any rate, her husband believed in her social powers. He begs her to conciliate and charm Mrs. Grant: 'If you do all that your knowledge of the world, tact, and genius will enable you to do, then you will do a thousand times more in captivating the woman than I could possibly do with the husband.'

Of intimate friends outside her own family there is not much suggestion in these letters. Mrs. Butler may have had them; during the war period she was too busy to give them much of her life. But those who were closely connected with her had claims that were never disregarded. She was deeply attached to her brother and sisters, and her devotion to her dying sister is eminently pathetic. She was sensitive to all suffering and misery, and her grief over the wounded in the hospitals depresses and unnerves her. Energetic, self-sustained, well-balanced as she was, all this crowding burden of varied life sometimes overcomes her, and she cries out for peace — and love: 'I get so wearied and nervous with the varying cares that if there is not absolute peace between you and me, *somewhere, to rest*, — I falter at once and sink down presently, bruised, and helpless — till the daily routine hurries me on again, to care for the many that come.'

Yes, for all the happy background, in that tremendous crisis of national and personal struggle there could not but be many weary and discouraged hours, hours when it seemed as if the nerves and muscles would positively and finally refuse to do their duty. 'I am in that state of nervous irritation that I cannot endure to think on one thing for five minutes.' And so fatigue and ill health have their normal place in the letters, as they have in life. He has his times of illness and she is anxious about him, anxious to take care of him, anxious as to how he will be taken care of. She has her own times of illness, when for the moment even she has to give up. But she is at it again quickly, for there is not a trace of the shirk about her; on the contrary, she is bound to die fighting, if die she must: 'In truth, I could sink down wearied, only that that is a poor resource, not fit for a thinking, earnest man or woman.'

She had her higher forms of refuge, also, to which she could escape when the daily strain and turmoil got too much for her. She had a broad, lucid intelligence, and liked to use it at all times. Beauty appealed to her and consoled her; not so much perhaps beauty of painting or music, — at least she makes little reference to these, — but beauty of literature and the

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splendor of the great poets. Also, she was exquisitely alive to the charm of nature and has really magical words for rendering it. Storms thrill her and enchant her, and she watches delightedly the movement of the swallows or the martins through them and before them. Then a calm night sets her dreaming, and all she asks is love to share it: —

'Such a flood of light and beauty you never gazed on. The moon is full — the wind cool and fragrant, waving the long, pendent willows that float like a woman's hair on the sighing breeze. The long, dark shadows sweep over the lawn and roads. It is not calm and still. The deep sighs and whispering among the trees make it a night of strange, mysterious beauty. The air is alive with spirits, agitated with sudden news; they float tremulously in and out among the trees like phantoms, as they are.'

Then there was God, an even surer refuge for spent nerves and fainting courage. But God is not especially prominent in these letters of Mrs. Butler. She may have been settled on the fundamentals, but she hardly retained the childish simplicity of faith, any more than her husband retained it. With his glib tongue and facile memory, he was always citing Scripture for his purposes, too often with the unfortunate lack of taste which so fatally characterized him. But it is doubtful if the impressions went very deep. When his wife is considering joining the church, he puts no difficulties in her way, but frankly confesses that he cannot share her faith: 'If I *could* believe, I would become a member of the church, but alas! I have n't faith. You may have.' But when it comes to the point of decision, she doubts and hesitates. In an admirable passage of thoughtful debate, she examines her attitude. Yet still, still she is not ready for the final surrender: 'I have a great dread of doing anything hypocritical, and many things that I am not now aware of might come up to make me feel that I was out of place.'

The harmony between husband and wife was even less disturbed in earthly relations than in heavenly. They both were devoted to their children and took great comfort and satisfaction in them, and the children did them credit. The daughter, Blanche, inherited her mother's beauty, and much of her mother's varied attraction and charm. Mrs. Butler's letters are full of references to the children's welfare. She is solicitous about their health, their education, their clothing, and their future. As she reads that of her daughter from her own, she feels a mixture of foreboding and hope. 'She will see things more charming, rich, and clothed with a dreamy beauty, sometimes in her life, and she will be more worried, troubled, and shaken with grief at others. So the balance will be about even. But if I were to choose for her, I would have her jolly and selfish.'

Yet dear and close to her as the children are, they are forgotten in a profounder, tenderer attachment, and when she is parting from her husband even the thought of home cannot console her: 'You will not be surprised at this deep sadness which held me even up to our own gate, without one throb of pleasant expectation at sight of home and all it contains until I heard the sound of the children's voices playing in the evergreens.'

## II

For, under the varied current of normal, daily life, the one thing that counts in her existence is the love for Benjamin F. Butler, and the

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longing to have him love her in return. This love, and the singular gift of subtle self-analysis with which she depicts it, make her correspondence a high-wrought romance, tortured at moments into tragedy, and perfectly absorbing to watch in its nature and development. She was a self-analyst in everything. But all the penetration of the analytical instrument is chiefly applied to the dissection of these intensest of human relations, which she cannot understand, because nobody does, but which tantalize her, and perplex her, and fascinate her, in the ever-renewed effort to unravel them.

The delicacy of this analysis will appear in nearly all the passages that I quote, but it cannot be better summed up than in the sentences in which she explains and defends the candor and directness of her letters: 'I must express myself, and the varying feelings and contending passions that beset me, and the look of men and of nature as seen through my eyes, or my letters will be so meagre and threadbare you will not care to read them. It will not be me that writes, but a thing I am trying to fashion to suit you, which would soon become a nonentity, made up of platitudes. I will express the evil and the good that is in me, life as it looks to me, let my own individuality have fair expression (it will, no matter how close I hedge), and if I hurt sometimes, I may be able to atone at others.'

It is evident that, with such an analytical temperament, happiness, at least in this mingled world, is hardly possible. Nerves so constituted are exquisitely sensitive to joy, but they are too well aware that joy's hand is ever at his lips bidding farewell. Not that Mrs. Butler was an habitual and obvious pessimist. Far from it. But the larger sense of human misery was never far off, and it takes little to make it well up in words of strange, compelling beauty, sometimes merely pathetic and appealing, sometimes with a note of proud rebellion, almost of despair: —

'Oh, dear, I shall die, with catching at straws! I could laugh out like a maniac, but I won't. I have a great mind to pack one trunk and go into Asia all by myself. In that way, I might manage to stay in the world by going out of it. Now, I am not good to-night, nor resigned to what is placed before me, but am beset with an ugly feeling of humorous and fiendish mockery at the way things look. No doubt some evil thing is tampering with us. I will say my prayers, put out the light, and creep into bed beside of Blanche.'

These moods of restless distress were naturally fostered and augmented by her husband's necessary absence on his military duties. Sometimes she is able to be in the South with him. But again he is far, far away, and for all her cares and all her intensely active occupations she has too many minutes and hours when she dwells upon the remoteness and the solitude and the hopeless, unforgettable void. Though it is right and best for her not to be with him for the time, she cannot reconcile herself to it, longs unspeakably to tell him all she feels, almost determines that they shall never be parted again. Above all, she not only wants to be with him, she wants him to want her with him, and the reiterated expression of this haunting human lover's doubt and desire is strangely poignant in its intensity. Sometimes it appears in just a touch, part playful, part tender, part reproaching: 'Well, dearest, would you like to see me? "Yes, very well if you did not weary me with asking the question." Good-night, good-night.' Sometimes it develops in longer complaint, even with a suggestion of bitterness: 'You may not be aware

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how much the tone of your letters has changed. In every letter I have asked, begged, to know if you wished me to come, and when. After telling me three times not to come, the only permission I have received is this: "*If* you can appear so and so, I shall be glad to see you." I shall be as God wills, and circumstances compel, subject to the same feelings as other people. . . . Your letters have hurt me. I cannot bear it, nor the manner in which you have asked me to come.'

And immediately one wonders, how did the husband take all this, what was his attitude in the matter? It is the old, old story. He loves her with his whole heart; her love is an essential part of his life, perhaps the most essential part. But he is secure of it, and he is immensely busy with other interesting affairs. He really cannot be quite so preoccupied with sentiment, nor understand why she is. Again and again he expresses the tenderest, most obviously genuine feeling, not always with such words as hers, sometimes with his fatal lack of taste, but at other times very charmingly. When she is fretful and disturbed, he tries to laugh her out of it. Really, they have loved each other devotedly for twenty years, they are grown, middle-aged man and woman, above all they are in the thick of the world's great affairs; and is it not just a little trivial to let one's self be so tormented with the strange, subtle fancies of the heart? Or he takes it more seriously, begs that his already enormous cares should not be augmented by her who ought to relieve them: 'Was ever a good, kind, loving wife so afflicted with her own sad fancies? And your letter fell upon me like a stone.' Or, in a sadder, quieter mood, he feels that she has misunderstood him in her querulous criticism, but feels also the tender, moving charm of her misunderstanding: —

'You make a part of the voyage of life, on to its port of destination, that deviation which was and is but a stupid and foolish blunder of the helmsman. You set down as a part of the original purpose and chart of the voyage acts which were only intended and done to correct the blunder of the steersman. But sadly, beautifully have you wrought it out, and admiration, love, sadness, pity, sympathy, and yearning tenderness, mingled with whirling celerity as I read. Ah me! That my faults should return to me with such vivid painting by such a hand!'

And is it not a study of strange fascination to see two persons, who were playing such great and open parts in the world, tearing away at each other's hearts, as if they were Antony and Cleopatra, and the world were indeed well lost for love? And she perfectly appreciates the strangeness, and admits it, and regrets it. She has been foolish, she has been mistaken, she will do differently. Yet she troubles him again, again intrudes the old, teasing, torturing doubts and wishes, till he actually rebels and speaks with a harshness that he does not mean any more than she means her complaint: 'I knew too well the result, foresaw it, and was *fool* enough to be persuaded into changing what was a lifetime conviction upon some supposed idiocy that you were not like other women. Now you have a right to write me such admonitions, but you had better not.' And thus the old endless battle of the heart's unfulfilled desire is fought out. Only, in this woman, it is fought out with a singular clarity and force.

And it cannot be said that her distrust or distress ever go so far as actual jealousy — at least in her letters as printed for us. I have no reason to suppose that she had cause for such a feeling. Indeed, I am assured by an

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intimate friend of Mrs. Butler's, so far as such assurance goes, that she never had cause. On one occasion Butler attempts one of his peculiarly infelicitous jokes: 'I must lose my housekeeper. . . . I shall have to get another. What say you to a young, dashing, black-eyed brunette, with a strong tongue and a sharp nose, that will make us all stand around?' And the suggestion is taken up in a manner that shows the far-off sensitiveness of that clinging affection: 'I see you have not received my letters, or this matter of housekeepers would not be presented either for blondes or brunettes. But let that pass. Gilman can look that the Negroes do not destroy; there should be no other servants in your house. I speak now for your own honor; what might be supposed to affect me is of little moment. None can make me less than I hold myself, as *expecting* consideration; if I deserve more, it will be estimated hereafter.'

But such unhappiness as there is goes far deeper than any temporary jealousy, strikes right down to the fundamental incompatibilities and impossibilities of separated human hearts. Always there is that longing for perfect union and identity. Always there is the hopelessness of achieving it. Sometimes this is suggested in a brief, impersonal, general touch: 'Ah me! there is such a wide difference between man's thought and woman's.' Sometimes it takes the form of a querulous petulance, hardly intended or perhaps even realized: 'I verily believe my letters would be more welcome to any man on your staff than they are to you, and that is saying but little.' Sometimes there is just the vast sense of fatigue and pettiness, the vague desire to be caressed and cherished and taken care of: 'Oh, dearest, I feel just as Benny does, when he creeps into my lap at night and wants me to rock and sing to him. And there is nobody to rock or sing or care anything about me. . . . I especially wish to-night that somebody loved me, a little, I am so tired; but I hardly think there is anyone can, it is so much work. And really it is folly to trouble about it.' Or again there is almost a proud pleasure in superior sensibility, a feeling that there is a distinction in the misery of analysis itself, and that only those natures feel the separation and incompleteness that are really worthy to be completed: —

'Life with people like you and me cannot roll on like a long, calm, quiet summer's day. We shall have the variety of the seasons, storm, calm, the bright promise of spring, the sick and melancholy glories of autumn. All experiences of life will come to us because we are capable of them all, we shall sound every string from the lowest note to the top of our compass. May we learn to touch those strings gently that produce discord!'

## III

But everywhere and at all times, through all the analysis and all the suffering, the passion for identity is there, the desire to be lost in love itself, if not in the object of that love. The lover has no existence, desires none, except as she is bound up with the one being to whom she has relinquished all her fate. At least this is true for the period covered by the letters that are given to us. And the intensity of self-abandonment is made all the clearer by the slight glimpses we get of an earlier life, of more personal hopes and ambitions, which prevailed before love had conquered all. It is evident everywhere that ambition, the intense desire to realize one's full powers and do something great in the world, was inborn in this energetic spirit. Romance, the wide sweep of imagination,

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ever devising larger hopes and nobler triumphs, was so native to her that neither years nor disappointments nor sorrows could wholly wear it away. 'I do not live like other people, I am confident. I began life entirely different from those I knew. I am as far apart from them now as then. . . . In every fibre of me is woven a romance that will die when I am dead, and not till then. It is not the school-girl fever, that must find an object, make a match, and then is commonplace forever. But a love of beauty, of art, even where it is not cultivated, an instinctive love of it in every form, in books, painting, poetry, and music. . . . There is a deep and keen sensibility in my nature that time does not deaden; I think it only intensifies.'

With this passionate attitude toward life, it is easy to conceive what it must have meant to abandon a career upon the stage, though no actual reference to this struggle appears. Hints of it are implied almost pathetically in the constant quotation of Shakespeare with which Mrs. Butler's letters are filled. It seems as if not only the better-known plays, but all of them, had become part of her thought and life to such an extent that bits from them creep into her own writing almost unconsciously. And all this suggests that she might, at some time, have had literary ambitions also. Certainly the power and beauty of her letters would justify it; I am convinced that if they could be gathered into a volume by themselves they would soon be established among the classics of American literature.

But whatever hopes of this kind she may have cherished, it is obvious that they were gradually lost and merged in the larger career of the brilliant erratic personality to which she had attached herself. From 1860 on, or probably from much earlier, Mrs. Butler's ambition was her husband's and her husband's only. As for the quality of his, it undoubtedly lacked the clear, pure flame of hers; but it was large and sweeping enough — some might say brutal enough — to absorb, if not to satisfy, anyone. In moments of enthusiasm the ambition knew no limits, reached out for the highest conception of power, of course to be used for the highest good, as in the notable passage: 'It is coming — a "Military Dictator." God grant the man may be one of power and administrative capacity. Let it come — the man has not developed himself yet — but he will — in the field too, before long. The day of small expedients and small men is getting by. Well, an empire is the repose as it is the ripeness of nations.'

Then, after the moods of enthusiasm, came the moods of discouragement. Merit was not recognized. Stupid cabals blighted honest effort. West Point hung like a cloud over real genius and intelligence and made advancement impossible. What was the use anyway? With age creeping on, what was there left in life worth a man's ambition or his hope? 'It is all a blank, and I think not of much consequence. There is not much worth living for to a man of forty-five. We have seen it all. How tame is life now in comparison with what it was! All's known. Why drag out a few more years to reiterate the same routine? Alas! for the enthusiasm of youth!'

Yet right beside him all the time was this woman who, for him at any rate, was never doubtful, never discouraged, never depressed. What superb, unshakable confidence she has in him! His intelligence, his will, his character — who can equal them? 'I do not often praise you, but it is my firm belief that there is but *one man* now known to the people who can save this country in its present critical state from utter

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loss and confusion irremediable; and that is yourself.'

And she did not stop with approval. She urged, excited, spurred on to glorious deeds and great adventures. The stakes are high, immense; what matters it, play on, play all: 'There is but a step sometimes between a crown and a gibbet, and in days like these one cannot tell to which his labors will lead.' Never falter, never flag! Fail? Screw your courage to the sticking-place and you'll not fail. 'You have many times wrung triumph from the very clutch of despair, and will do it again, and again, in despite of them all. Never yield an inch, or droop an hour, disheartened. It is the great game of life you are playing. And it goeth faster than a weaver's shuttle. Your brain spins swifter than other men, and you must *weave* while you *spin*.'

And then she blends a dozen feelings and motives together, love, ambition, fidelity, Shakespearean reminiscence, and seasons it all with that sweet, subtle, tender marital playfulness, which is both a cement of solidarity and a sad seal of separation: 'So, so, I must not expect you here. You are so enamored of your trade, a day cannot be lost from it. You might exclaim with Antony, "Oh, love, that you knew the royal occupation, then should you see a workman in it!" I shall not help to buckle on your armor, but I have mended your drawers and will return them to you when they are nicely pressed.'

And she not only stimulates generally, she understands and follows all the details of his thought and effort, and her advice and influence are evident at all stages of his career. Politics? There was not a quiver of his political aspiration which she did not understand and sympathize with. When she is at home in Lowell, she studies the situation carefully and analyzes its broader aspects in a way which she thinks impossible for him when engaged in actual combat. She implores him to cultivate some influences and to avoid others. Seward — much should be made of Seward. And she never ceases to deplore that she could not have had the opportunity of dealing with Seward herself. Grant, Lincoln, all of them, must be handled with care and tact. So must the people at large, and if they are, surely in the end they must come to appreciate the absolute necessity of falling back upon her idol for salvation.

But interested and interesting as Mrs. Butler is in politics, she is even more so in military matters. The 'plumed troop and the big wars' are not remote from her — far from it. She studies all her husband's military associates and has her most distinct opinion about them. This one is a help and a resource, to be relied on and trusted. That other will fail at a pinch: do not believe in him, keep away from him. She follows actual movements in the field with passionate solicitude, and drives home her injunctions with sledge-hammer vigor: '*Think*, while you have the time, note everything great and small, trace back every step of this campaign, see if there has been a blunder made, and what is likely to be Grant's movement from this time out, and where you would be able to strike the best blow if they send you more troops.'

Oh, that she were a man! Not that she is ever unwomanly, unfeminine, ever for a moment gives that impression: she does not. She is keenly susceptible of fear, and admits it — fear, on occasion, for herself, much more the wife's and lover's fear for him. Repeatedly she begs him not to expose himself foolishly or unnecessarily. But when the tense strain

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comes, when her high-wrought fancy is kindled by ambition and love, then all the woman is melted out of her and she is ready for any great emprise: 'The death of General Williams has nerved me like steel. Would I were a man. I am stronger in the hour of danger, for then I forget myself and woman's cares, and feel all the high enthusiasm that leads to deeds of fame, and for this reason it is better I should be with you. I could never pull you back from what I thought it your duty to do, but should urge you forward, and help, with all the wit I have.'

The concrete instance of this splendid urgency that touches me most is Butler's own account of his wife's conduct when the troopship which he commanded was stranded and in imminent danger off Cape Hatteras. Mrs. Butler tells the story vividly, but makes little of her part in it. But her husband himself depicts his discouragement and almost despair. With no subordinates on whom he could rely, with slight marine experience of his own, he was almost ready to give up hope and even control. 'As I sat with my hand covering my face, I felt a light touch on my shoulder. I looked up and Mrs. Butler was standing beside me. "Cheer up," she was saying; "do the best you can, resume your command, and perhaps all will be well."' All was well, and the woman's quiet words carried him through that crisis, as they carried him through so much of life.

Not that at all times she was not keenly aware of his weaknesses and deficiencies. These wives, with their terrible vision, always are aware. Sometimes she cautions, sometimes she chides, sometimes she mocks gently. 'So, so, "sufferance is the badge of all your tribe," is it? You make me smile. It is the one quality you most heartily abjure — patience and sufferance will never be guests of yours. If pressed in they will get cheap entertainment and speedily be shown the door.' But let anyone else criticize, and how quickly she leaps to his defense. His enemies get no consideration from her. They are animated by prejudice and mean envy, and in the end that sure old arbiter, Time, will bring their devices to naught.

It is perhaps here that we should observe just the slightest trace in her of that lack of a higher, finer delicacy which is so deplorably obvious in him. Not that we are to infer it in her because she loved him: alas, we see the love of higher, finer natures just so misplaced every day. But at times she has a touch of his acerbity which I regret. Also, I could wish that she had stood out resolutely against the gifts which he was constantly sending from the South to her and to others. Of one such case she writes: 'Mr. Butler has sent his mother a service of silver, four pieces; he bought it by weight. There has been so much talk, I would not say much about it if I were her, for envy makes people bitter. . . . There is nothing to conceal, but envious minds will not believe so.' There may have been nothing to conceal, but at least such purchases were wrung from the cruel necessity of war, and it was far better to eschew them altogether, as Sherman did.

Yet these minor matters must not for a moment be understood to imply any essential flaw in the nobleness of the woman's spirit. She aimed high always, looked high, loved high, in a lofty fashion and for lofty purposes. However her beloved might strive highly, she wished him to strive holily. Just how much she knew about the complicated business transactions that went on under Butler's administration we cannot tell, because we cannot tell anything definite about themselves. But we do know that wherever he went

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he was followed by a train of financial adventurers, always ready to make commercial advantage out of the necessities of friend and enemy alike, and that this train brought upon his reputation a cloud of discredit such as affects no other commander of equal rank, either North or South. And at least it is evident that the wife knew enough about it all to feel the intense danger and scandal of it, to understand that he was wantonly and foolishly imperiling his happiness and hers, and all the larger, saner ambition which she so deeply cherished for him.

With what profound insight does she analyze, even at an early stage, the weakness which held so much possibility of evil: 'Beside the fond devotion of a wife, there is still the same responsibility felt by me for whatever you may do, as there was years ago when you laid your head on my lap, and prayed me to look kindly and lovingly into your face. I saw then what I have since seen in Paul, but not in the other children, peculiarities easily wrought upon, and dangerous from their very simplicity. . . . Yes, that readiness to believe in the "*fair outward seeming*" is but an indication of your faith in deeper, higher, and holier objects, though these you may often turn away from and seem to disregard. Guard against this last, oh, dear love, guard against it. Try not ever with sophistries to obscure to your own mind the clear dividing lines of right and wrong.'

How tersely and how ardently does she caution him against the tendencies that beset him: 'No man that I brought into the Department, were I you, should be allowed to do things that I did not fully understand.' Again, 'Keep the men whom you know to be honorable, capable business men, who are decent in their morals and conduct, and root out the others without mercy.' With what a cry of agony does she deplore the influence of those who, she sees too clearly, are working ruin and disaster. 'Is it not enough to make one mad that after two years of agony which I have borne, and after I had proved to him that Jackson was the cause of his failure at Fortress Monroe, yet again that he should bestow all power and give all confidence once more, to have his reputation assailed, and the power he has and might yet gain, slip from his grasp and crumble to nothing?'

Yet through it all not for one moment does the love falter or the devotion fail. She has merged her heart and her hope and her life in this love, and neither Heaven nor Hell nor Eternity can shake it. All that she has and is and can be depends upon the desperate effort to achieve identity with this other soul that, as all souls do, eludes her grasp and flits away from her. For still, still, back of the effort for identity is the everlasting impossibility of it, which makes the tragedy of marriage, the tragedy of love, the tragedy of all our baffled, frail, uncertain human life. As Matthew Arnold has it, our souls are petty islets, set forever apart in an impassable, unfathomable ocean.

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
. . . . . .
We mortal millions live *alone*.
. . . . . .
But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
. . . . . .
Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
. . . . . .
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

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# JUSTICE WHILE YOU WAIT

BY NORA WALN

It was in Nanking. I had gone to the city market to buy apricots for preserving and used more time in making my purchase than I had planned. Apprehensive lest I reach home too late to witness a tennis match in which my husband was to play, I swung the motor car around a corner faster than I should have done in a street not made for motor traffic and in a country where wayside shops spring up by magic overnight.

My rear mudguard collided with the bamboo corner-post of a new teahouse and the flimsy structure collapsed, bringing down with it the kettle of hot water, the charcoal-burner, — which rolled across the road in a trail of glowing ash, — a neatly piled pyramid of oranges, a canister of dry tea, sundry pieces of crockery, and the greater part of the teahouse, on the head of the old woman shopkeeper. The stool on which she had been seated was squashed flat. She still sat on it, clutching her cash-box to her breast.

Naturally she was in no smooth humor. Amid the babble of language that she screamed at me, while the crowd collected, I gathered that I was 'the child of a fish,' a 'hot boiled sweet potato,' a 'pale-faced demon,' a 'turnip-footed foreigner,' and a 'wild woman with a coat on wrong side out.' What more I might have learned about myself I do not know, because Chang, my Chinese servant who had been with me to market, stepped from the car.

He bowed to the policeman, to the old woman, and to the crowd. In ingratiating tones I heard him say, 'She is only a little girl and she knows nothing of the customs of our people.'

I gasped at this, but I was to hear still more to blast my self-pride.

'She is driving a fire-eating wagon, and, as you can all see, she is far too incompetent to have any control over this great demon.'

The crowd nodded assent. The old woman said, 'Yes, yes.'

'What is done is done,' Chang continued. 'The attractive little shop of the thrifty old wife is demolished. It lies about her in ruin.'

The old woman began to scream again. 'It is ruin — I am ruin — all my trade gone — even now some customer might have been buying hot tea — ruin — all ruin — all the fault of the careless wealthy foreigner!'

Here my servant became shrewd. He knows the limits of my purse and, should there be any chance for leakage, he reserves the right to direct it into his own pocket. So he spoke.

'Ah, but the motor wagon does not belong to my mistress. It is the property of the tall master, and he will be angry, very angry, and use hot words because of what has been done. The damage is the fault of the shopkeeper who built a shop where there was no shop before, thus closing the road and causing the horrible scar which all the crowd may see on the side of the car.'

Even the old woman rose from the débris of her shop and came and looked at the scar. I sat motionless at the wheel, a prisoner awaiting sentence at



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the bar of a Chinese street-court, where public opinion is the judge.

One of the crowd took a long opium-pipe out of his mouth and queried: 'We can all see the shattered shop and the damaged fire-wagon; but what is to be done to make it all right?'

'Nothing can be done for the fire-wagon,' my cook said stoutly, 'because there is no man here wise enough to repair that damage. Much money must be spent, and a man must come all the way from Shanghai.'

'Perhaps so,' said a gray-haired grandpa, with a little boy clinging to his withered hand; 'but after all, the foreign owners brought the foreign car to this city. It is not a possession of the native people. It is a scatterer of dust and foul-smelling gas, a menace to the children who play by the road, an annoyance to pedestrians, a destructive element in the life of the city.'

Chang bowed. 'And yet you would have one, honored sire, if you could. The Military Governor has one. Lui, the silk-dealer, has another.'

'This is not rebuilding my shop,' wailed the woman.

'Two coolies could be hired to put the shop together again, and the foreigner should pay for the labor,' said a man in a silk gown.

This was agreed. Two coolies set to work. The bamboo house grew again like a mushroom, in the exact spot where it had been before. The crowd lent a hand in clearing away the old wreckage from under the motor wheels. My cook haggled over the bargain, accepted the general opinion, paid the coolies the equivalent of fifteen cents in United States money, and gave the old woman thirty cents to buy fresh supplies. There was peace.

The crowd, pleased with the outcome of its judgment, beamed upon the old shopkeeper and myself alternately. I bowed to the old wife, and she who had called me many names in anger a little time before smiled and returned the bow. I turned on the motor. The crowd slowly dispersed. The policeman gave a military salute.

'It could not be helped. Accidents are accidents. Do not worry about what has happened,' the policeman said paternally.

Again it was at the temple bazaar, where I had gone with a Chinese woman friend at the time of the Festival of Clear Brightness. Just outside the temple gates a crowd had collected about a centre of commotion. The curious old amah Yuan-yang (Faithful Duck), who always accompanies my friend Hsing-o, soon broke a passage through the crowd by repeated cries of 'Lend light! Lend light! Ladies of the Lui household come this way,' and thus gained a vantage position from which we could see and hear.

A man in the uniform of the city police held two men apart, one in either hand; but we saw the one in the silk coat struggle free and grab the victim in the blue coat by the throat.

'He is a thief! He has my money pouch!' Silk Coat cried, as a bystander loosened his fingers from Blue Coat's throat.

'How do you know that I have your money?' Blue Coat grunted sullenly.

'Because it is gone, and you stood near me when it disappeared.'

'Other men have stood near you in the market place,' a disinterested citizen put in.

'That is so,' said a fat woman.

'It is n't so. He took it!'

'You should not tie your shoes in a melon patch,' Yuan-yang added her thought. 'If you are not a thief, you should not press against other folk in the market place.'

'Both men should be searched to discover which has the contested



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money,' interposed a scholarly-looking man. 'That is the only way to get at the root of the trouble.'

The court in session — that is, the chance-collected crowd of men and women of various stations in the city life — agreed to this. The search began, both men submitting to what public opinion had decided necessary.

In the midst of the search a small boy on the edge of the crowd cried shrilly, 'Here is the money! I have found my father's purse!' And sure enough, he came dragging a decently clad man backward from the place where the fellow had been making a careful exit after taking part in the discussion. Beneath his short satin coat, the tail of which the small boy held up, dangled a purse.

It was identified and returned to the rightful owner. After a short discussion it was decided by those assembled that the thief should pay each of the injured men two dollars because of the inconvenience he had caused them. These sums he paid from his own purse. Then a square of pasteboard was brought from one of the bazaar stalls and the scholar wrote upon it with thick strokes of black ink: BEWARE — THIS MAN IS A THIEF. The placard was hung about the pickpocket's neck, and he was ordered to sit beside the temple gates until sundown.

No guard was left to watch him, but when I walked that way after tea he was sitting in the appointed place, staring straight in front of him, ignoring completely a crowd of little boys who amused themselves by flinging abusive remarks at him.

Sometimes queer twists are given to cases. On the train south of the Nankow Pass two years ago the following happened.

I had been gazing idly out of the window, dreaming over the rugged beauty of the Great Wall as I had seen its bleak gray strength during the midwinter storms of the last two days, comparing this visit with those of other seasons — spring, when a carpet of new grass crept up to the grim bricks, and violets and wild strawberries ventured to blossom in broken crevices; summer, when the scorching sunshine glittered on the granite, and deepened the cheeks of persimmons that hung on loaded trees; autumn, when golden brown tones mellowed the landscape and painted the Wall with warm daubs of color. Loud voices roused me from my dreams to consciousness of a row in the section next to mine.

The conductor — dressed, by the way, in black-velvet trousers and green-silk coat, with a derby hat on the back of his head — had asked a Chinese soldier for his railway ticket.

'See my superior officer in the next car about it. He has my fare,' the soldier said stubbornly.

A few minutes later there was a clanking of spurs, a rattle of belted swords, a glitter of medals, and a deep voice demanding, 'Who are you, to tell the conductor I have your fare?'

'A private in your regiment.'

The officer sniffed. 'You're a mud turtle!'

For that remark the private slapped his superior officer soundly in the face. The officer sprang at him to return the cuff. Two men rose from their seats and held them apart. A crowd of passengers gathered, to discover what was the trouble and assert their right to sit in judgment over a disturbance of the peace.

The conductor began his explanation of the trouble.

'This private referred me to his officer for his railway fare. The officer says he has no ticket for the private and no money in his purse to pay. He resents the private telling me that his

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officer will pay. He says the private was given money for transportation.'

'Yes, yes,' pressed the crowd. 'But where is the ticket now? Soldiers are lazy and useless. Why should they ride free when other men have to pay?'

'Pay — how can I pay?' sneered the soldier, as he struggled to be loose and at his officer. 'The money I had for my ticket has gone for eggs.'

'Ah, now we are reaching a solution,' from a civilian. 'Where are the eggs?'

'Two thirds are in the belly of my officer.'

Attention focused on the officer.

'If you have the receipt the merchant gave when you bought the eggs it would be proof that you bought them,' a man in spectacles suggested to the private.

'The receipt is in my coat and there it shall remain. It is the only proof I have that my officer ate my ticket.'

'Conductor, if you had this receipt would it not show that the man had money for a ticket but that it is now gone — would it not serve in place of a ticket?' queried Spectacles.

'There is no stop between here and the destination of the two. It would be more expensive to halt the train and put them out than to let one ride without a ticket. Yes — I will take the egg receipt.'

A sullen grumble from the private. 'I will not give it.'

'It is the property of the conductor,' from the crowd.

'Hand it over,' said the officer.

'Shut your face or I will smash it shut!' This remark from the private to his superior officer broke upon my astonished ears.

There was a scuffle. The two were pulled apart.

'Take the officer back to his compartment,' said Spectacles. 'Leave me to get the egg receipt for you.'

The others of the crowd agreed to leave the matter to the spectacled citizen. The officer was led away. I turned to my window. A low conversation went on behind me. In a little time the conductor returned, and Spectacles handed over the egg receipt.

Then the conductor moved halfway down the aisle and returned.

'By the way, I do not think I collected your ticket.' He spoke to Spectacles.

'I have no ticket,' was the calm response, 'but in the car there is peace. Where there is peace let peace remain.'

Peace remained.

When I itch to get at the root of a thing and deal out just punishment, which I see Chinese people calmly accepting, my memory usually flashes before me a picture to remind me that Oriental and Western logic are as far apart as the two Poles.

This time it was an incident in Canton that came to me. Soldiers had come to exact an exorbitant tax which the mayor demanded of two merchants, Chou and Wing. The two men saw the soldiers approaching and ran for cover, but Chou, who had been standing in the doorway, failed to escape. Wing hid himself away in the recesses of the shop. Chou was forced to deal with the intruders alone, and was made to pay a large sum of money to save his life.

'How did you feel when you heard your partner threatened?' I queried of Wing when I heard the tale.

'I felt that one dead man was better for the business than two dead men,' Wing answered seriously.

Chou nodded his head in solemn assent. The half-dozen customers and clerks who listened in on the conversation, in true Oriental fashion, — by which it is never rude to be interested in what one's neighbor says, — nodded their heads also in accord with this sensible way of reasoning.

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While civil war rages north, south, east, and west, the simple, common, everyday life of the people goes on by common law, under which it is understood that each family is responsible for all its members down to the nineteenth cousin; that each crowd is responsible for the settlement of disputes that arise in its midst; and that villages and hamlets can survive only by observance of what custom has made common law. It is the big cities with their unwieldy population that suffer most. The small places still cling to the custom of taking their heaviest responsibilities before the elders of the place.

It was in the village of The Workers in the Noonday Sun, where I spent two months in the household of the Wong family, that I first heard a case tried before the city elders. The latter are men appointed by no election and serving without remuneration — chosen by common consent of the people because of their wisdom.

The very household of which I was a guest was shaken to its foundations upon discovery that the wife of the eldest son was expecting a child, although her husband had been absent from home for nearly two years. Such a crime is, according to custom, punishable with death, but custom also decrees that the woman shall not be punished until after the child's birth.

Suspicion pointed to the son of neighbors whose western compound wall was the eastern wall of the Wong dwelling. The injured husband was called home. The case was brought before the elders. After two weeks of evasion and discussion the young man confessed his guilt and was turned over to the husband to be put to death, as the elders decided that was his right. Lee-wo was confined in a far part of the Wong compound.

The day of the woman's delivery came. A boy was born and the news was carried to the husband. The wife had already borne her own husband seven daughters but no sons.

An hour after the birth of the child an amah came into my room to fetch me a cup of tea. 'The master has sent a bowl of vermicelli to Lee-wo,' she said simply. 'We are all well pleased. A boy child is needed in the house of Wong.'

'I do not understand,' I stammered, for the sorrow of the household had lain heavy on my heart.

'It means that the husband forgives his wife and takes the boy as his own, and in conjunction with the city elders he has decided that banishment for life shall be the fate of Lee-wo.'

When dawn came Lee-wo was escorted to the outskirts of the city, supplied with a roll of bedding and a knapsack of food, on the understanding that he was never to touch foot on his native soil again.

It was also in this same village that I first saw a man go about in broad daylight with a lighted lantern.

'Is Sing, the fish-dealer, crazy?' I asked a friend.

'Oh, that is only the custom,' was the reply. 'It means that he has not been able to pay his debts, and must carry a lighted lantern everywhere until he has done so. Chinese New Year began yesterday; but for him the New Year has not dawned — it is still midnight of the old year. He may exchange no New Year greetings until he has settled up his old accounts, and his friends cannot greet him.'

Thus do customs take the place of statute regulations in a land where custom is common law.

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# BUCOLIC BEATITUDES

## III. BLESSED BE THE HORSE

BY RUSTICUS

I LIVE in a hunting-country. Every autumn our stone walls show tiny red banners marking the run, and the talk is much of horse.

I do not hunt, myself: my interest in the sport is purely academic. But of one thing I am sure — from an æsthetic standpoint there is no sport like it.

On occasions the run passes within sight of my abode and sometimes it begins or ends within a stone's throw of my outdoor bedroom. Those are the rare mornings. No need to watch the clock. You lie secure and warm, half sleeping, half awake, when slowly you hear far off that magic sound of beating hoofs — not the sharp rattle of steel on harsh macadam, but the low beat of distant hoofs on good, firm earth. There is no sound like it. You catch a suggestion of it sometimes when you ride alone and horse and rider share the glory of a run across some open meadow before you turn for the long, cool walk homeward with loose rein and lowered head. But to hear it in its perfection, scores of hoofs must beat in unison and it must begin far off and come on toward you with growing intensity.

I hear it and sit up. I pull the blankets close. It is frosty. Stray wisps of mist still lie in the hollows. From chaste retirement I can view the whole panorama. The hounds swing round the corner of the woods, tiny specks of brown and white in full cry, followed close by splashes of scarlet. On they come; they take each intervening wall smoothly and without effort. The field follows, strung out in orderly observance of the rules and courtesies, whatever they may be, of this regal game. And all the time the music of the hoofs swells about me, teases, tempts, and troubles.

The pack stops by the elm tree in Dolly's pasture. A grizzled rider yaps his immemorial call, as old as hunting, as ancient as this noble sport itself. He tosses titbits to the eager pack — their scant reward for miles of breathless coursing, unless the run itself be their reward. The old man has ridden many times like this; he knows the best there is to show. I wonder sometimes how he thinks we do, in this old sport, in this new country, for he has ridden with the best across the seas. I watched the hounds as they swept in and knew he must be pleased, for close-packed they came, as if they would make good his boast that one horse-blanket could cover them, the final and unfailing test. The field is in. The Master, magnificent in scarlet, sitting a fretful horse with smiling composure, greets them all — a friendly word and kindly smile for stragglers coming in a bit abashed. The steaming horses move in easy circles; grooms attend the more exalted riders.

They take the highway and in laughing groups go down the road. A boy appears and plucks the red pennants from the walls, and it is done.



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I nestle down. Once more my eyes have seen the glory of the field. I am content, and doze once more, and once again I feel unbounded admiration for the men and women who can so disport themselves before they break their fast.

At an appropriate and fitting hour I repair to my own stable. I do this with some hesitation, for, on these mornings when the hunting world has swung into our orbit, the Incomparable One greets me with a manner somewhat vague and questioning. He is not quite sure of me and not convinced that his own status is just what he would wish it to be. Why I am not afield he does not know; a horrid doubt assails him. On these mornings I tread with circumspection the devious paths of horsy talk.

Even in my little stable there is a strange unrest. Eyes are brighter, ears are up, and nervous hoofs are pawing.

I look them over; first my own, — of course no man may talk of what is his with any truth, — one in a thousand, purchased for a song, as is my wont by stern necessity, rescued from menial labor and now pet and darling of us all; perhaps a bit too much horse for me, but kind and willing, wise and spirited. The other two, black ponies with white stars, as like as sisters save that one has two white feet and one has one. Each owns a little mistress whom she loves, and these two ponies are as like their riders as if all four were sisters; one nervous, one sedate; one eager at the bit and to be handled with a steady hand; the other willing, always in the van, but temperate and steady. Just a word and she is back in hand. One curb, one snaffle, so it goes. But use them both aright and all is well.

There are two pleasures in this horse relation, one afield, and one here in the stable. To-day it is indoors, for the promise of the morning has failed. Already a gentle rain is falling and the woods are wet. I love to potter about a stable. A clean stable is the nicest-smelling place in the world. Why feminine nostrils object to stable smells indoors I never could understand; but that is only one small part of a greater riddle.

The Incomparable One has learned to know my oddities. One of them is an unreasonable passion for soft leather and glittering metal. What lovelier thing can mortal hand touch than leather, smooth and clean, as soft and supple as velvet? The trappings of my steeds are meagre and far from the best. I see that all is safe, no weak spots at buckles and other secret places; but once safe, that is as far as I can go, except that I believe and teach the simple theory that the poorer the tack the greater the care. And the Incomparable One does wonders. The bridles hang against a clean white cloth; the brow-bands in perfect alignment; the curb against the wall; the snaffle, broken, lying on the curb; the chain lies over the snaffle, reins looped high in perfect symmetry. There is a sight to please: the saddles on their racks with irons off, smooth, clean, and soft; no dust, no soap in crevices, betray an artist's hand. The irons hang on cleaning-hooks and wait a final polishing. The feed room next, with its supplies, and now aloft to where the sweet hay lies in dusty half-lights. What a place to dream an hour away, and what a play-place for little people, with minds afire with all the mystery and romance of their first young years!

And now it rains in earnest. I find a small green stool; I take it to the door and sit me down. An open stable-door, a windless rain, a dog beside you, and a bedraggled hen or two to scratch outside. This is the perfect place to be. The moist, damp odors all about you, the sound of restless hoofs, the grind of teeth on hay, the dropping water from the eaves, fill ears and heart and soul.

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What a strange thing it is that a certain type of biped called Man should have this chance dominion over all the other creatures! How he has bound them to his service! And of them all no one has suffered as the horse.

He seems more sensitive than the others. No horse has bad habits save man-taught ones. What a score on some far-off Judgment Day has the horse to settle with his master, man! And that is why I like to fuss with horses. I like to try to show them that this relationship can be agreeable to us both. I have no feeling for an outlaw horse, but any horse that has not had unfortunate human relationships too long is worth the experiment.

The horse is a habit-making, habit-controlled creature. The trick seems to be, so far as my very meagre experience has shown, to teach good habits. And of all the creatures I know man is in some ways the least fitted to teach them. He is vain, imperious, and often cowardly, and that is why a perfect horseman is just a bit more rare than a perfect poet. I have long since given over any ambition to write an epic poem, but I do hope, if life be spared, by patience, humility, and the sternest application to the task, to learn to ride a horse. I doubt my ultimate success, but somehow I feel that if I ever do, in the face of almost insuperable obstacles, both physical and mental, it will be a splendid achievement.

The golden autumn days go by and the first suggestion of real winter comes. We have, however, here and there a day dedicated to the horse.

Such a day dawns. It is the day that with us is devoted, in theory, to the memory of a Genoese sailor, and is made by beneficent legislation a holiday, a day free from the thralldom of office and of school! It has been decided that the morning shall be spent in tasks; there shall be an early lunch, and then a ride, timed to bring us back through the woods when the sun is low and streams in level golden shafts between the trees.

I seek the stable. Already preparations are afoot. My garb alone is warrant for the news. I watch the horses cleaned. I never watch a workman without a thrill; if only he be a real craftsman, a man who loves his work. And such a one is he who cleans my horses. I can clean a horse, after a fashion, but here is consummate art: free swing of comb and brush following the graceful lines of the creature's body; the softly spoken word to soothe impatience; the low soft whistling sound that none but the elect can manage; the tap of comb on hoof or floor; the fearless, accustomed handling of a horse. A perfect art, and loved, I know, by horse as well as man. What little skill I have in other things I'd gladly trade if I could clean a horse the way this old man does.

The hours lag, but now we meet for lunch. Plans are discussed, our course laid out. We make the meal a mockery and hurry to the stable. No having horses brought round to the door — not in our simple life are things like that. We seek them out and make the pleasure greater.

They stand in single file upon the floor, saddled and bridled, waiting our command. Each is covered with a bright plaid cooler; ears are erect; and nervous lips jingle the shining bits.

The Incomparable One is as busily important as if each steed were a prospective Derby winner. We pull off the coolers, each our own. We fold them up and hang them on the rail, and then we drop restraining hitching-ropes and go out single file. No mounting on a slippery stable-floor; we want good gravel, smoothly packed beneath our feet. And then I watch to see if lessons have been learned: three things to do before

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you mount. I smile at the Incomparable One, and he smiles too, as little hands seek saddle girths. A gentle tug; they are all right, not loose, not tight. Then the throatlatch is looked at; it must rest light and easy. Then the curb, to see if it be smooth. All is reported right, so then we mount. We feel again a moving creature under us; we feel the gentle lift of smooth, straight legs, and we are off.

I take my place with Two Feet on my right. I notice two links are dropped on her curb chain — it is well. One Foot sedately takes her place upon my left; her curb swings loose; no need for a free hand on that side.

We cross the first meadow at a walk. Two Feet capers and frets a bit; she has not learned yet what One Foot knows so well, that we walk this meadow to test the tack, to feel the seat we have, to find the irons, and to learn the mood that horse and rider share to-day. We turn into the next; and now a word, and heads come up and off we trot. A gentle pace, but still enough to bring the breeze to our faces, and now we hear the hoofs, the soft sound of yielding leather, and the click of steel. I look from right to left. Youth still fretful and impatient on my right, so I suggest a little lighter hand, a soothing word; upon the left, Experience trots with even temper and with steady stride.

Before us lies a smooth, ascending swell. I ask if we are ready, irons back, feet forward. Then a gentle pressure of the heel, a rein drawn lightly, and three creatures leap. Youth takes the lead; a word must bring her back. This is no race or steeplechase. So back she comes, but shakes her head and dashes foam upon her shoulder. Experience travels neck and neck with me, a tranquil eye, but nostrils quiver, and I wonder if she is recalling days when this pace was mere play for her. At the brow of the hill we pull up and loosen rein. Three heads go down a bit; we ease our seats, and I can see the glow in cheeks and eyes that must mean joy and health in future years.

And now a long walk to the woods. We talk of hands and knees, of heels, and of our mounts, each feeling that we ride the very best. And so it goes, walk, trot, and canter. Yes, my friend, that's all. I know it all seems tame to you. We hack, I know, but hacking at its best is all we ever hope or want to do. It is enough. It takes us out; it gives us joy to feel that we can do that much, and day by day we hope to do it better.

And now we reach the woods. The sun is right. We go in single file, with Experience ahead to show the way, and Youth comes next, and Age brings up the rear.

I look ahead at those two little figures. They are learning the hard lessons: constant care, constant thought, the hands, the knee, how often do I speak the word! How hard they try, and how fast they learn! I sometimes think it arrogant to teach; they do as well as I, and better too at times. But now no lessons for the woods entrance. Dry leaves are on the path and squirrels scold and scurry. We shout back and forth, 'Oh, look! See this, and that!' And then a new tremendous enterprise portends; a strange, new path leads — none of us knows where. We take it, and we wind and twist. What glorious fun, what adventure! And we shout with glee when it brings us out in well-known pastures far from home.

We turn across the broad acres of a friendly neighbor; a narrow shaded lane invites. A stern sign posted at the gate warns all away, but we are of the elect and enter in. We are under the pine trees now; the needles pave the path. Oh, what a footing! Once more we trot, and almost without sound of hoof we whirl along. Youth is calmer

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now; she works with us; she has learned the pace and keeps her stride unbroken. Experience asks for more bridle; she knows where she is, and wants a freer head on the long upgrade that brings us to my neighbor's house.

He sees us and waves his hand. He sits in a great chair upon his lawn. A perfect horseman, he will never ride again, but it is joy to him to see the children come, for to such as they he must pass the torch of gentle sportsmanship. And now the crowning moment comes. We swing into a great field, — again my kindly neighbor's, — and questioning eyes are turned to mine.

All right, we will — but careful now. I know the ground, it's smooth, without a hole, and yonder is a tiny jump, put there by kindly thought for children. I show the way, and as I turn to watch the others, Experience follows; her stride is easy, every nerve at rest. She takes the tiny jump as part of her day's work and canters up and stops. Youth now comes, pulling just a bit and nervous in her stride. She takes it well, but jumps a foot too high and does not want to stop when she is over. She will learn; when she has learned she will know that half the work will do it just as well.

And now the end. We whirl. We let them go. For one short moment we thunder side by side. We hear the hoofs; we feel the plunging bodies between our knees; we see the foam blown in the wind. The earth glides under us; we seem to fly. How sure the feet, how mighty are the muscles that hurl us forward! And how our hearts beat and how our faces tingle!

Now we turn toward home. Cool horses out, cool horses in, is our rule. We walk side by side and talk of our adventures. We tell where we were right and where we blundered; how wonderful the horses were; of the beautiful things we saw; of our friends who let us ride over their good land; how to do this and when to do that; all the wonderful minutiæ of the greatest sport in the world. We turn down our little avenue; we come home formally and in order.

The Incomparable One is waiting. We dismount, and he takes my horse out of deference to age and general incapacity. My comrades take charge of their own. We have learned it all — how saddles come off and what you do with them; how bridles come off and where to put them; what to do with the horses and why. What a world of fun it is! The sugar is brought, and glistening necks arch and gentle lips fondle the sweet offering lying in the flat palms of little hands. And then to the house, to talk it all over again with the world's most attentive listener.

When bedtime comes I see a light in the stable and go down to find the Incomparable One in the tiny saddle-room. Bridles are still on cleaning-hooks; girths wet with pipe clay hung to dry, sponges, soap, and chamois at every hand. He is a busy and a happy man.

Somehow that last gallop has made me feel a bit more his peer. I recalled one or two things I did rather better than usual. So the talk is once more easy, and for an hour it runs, and I listen well to the quaint, rich talk of a real horseman who loves even such horses as these poor steeds of mine. Shrewd, kindly, brave the old man is, and somehow I feel that his body has been kept young and strong, his soul serene and sweet, by his simple, whole-hearted love of horse.

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# THE TAX MAZE

BY GEORGE O. MAY

## I

'MAZE — A structure consisting of a network of winding and intercommunicating paths and passages arranged in bewildering complexity, so that without guidance it is difficult to find one's way in it.' — *Oxford Dictionary*

THE erection of the statue of Alexander Hamilton in front of the main Treasury Building in Washington raises the question who is to occupy the corresponding position in relation to the new Treasury Annex, devoted to the uses of the Internal Revenue Bureau. The action of Congress on the Mellon tax-plan last year suggests that the claims of the present Secretary would not — at this time, at least — be favorably considered. It may be that, rather than undertake the invidious task of passing on the relative claims of present-day statesmen, such as Representative Volstead and Secretary McAdoo, it would be safer to resort to classical mythology. A dethroned Bacchus is the first idea that suggests itself, but for a Bureau that includes the Income Tax unit as well as the Prohibition unit is there not at least as strong a claim to be made for Dædalus? And it was the same Congress which by the Volstead Act dethroned Bacchus that in its tax law outbuilt Dædalus. In maintaining its supremacy Congress has been at this disadvantage: that the labyrinth of Dædalus was designed only to entoil new victims, none of whom escaped to return and make a second attempt to solve its intricacies, whereas Congress had to prepare for adventurers who would return year after year. It must be admitted that hitherto Congress has been extraordinarily successful in introducing new complexities with sufficient frequency to preclude any possibility of victims acquiring familiarity with its maze; but is it right to ask or even to permit Congress to continue this effort indefinitely? Should not Congress now attempt to achieve something of the breadth and simplicity of the architecture of Athens, instead of continuing to emulate the complexities of Crete?

Those who are compelled to study the tax maze find in it an extraordinary series of contradictions. One of the most striking is seen in the lengths to which Congress goes on some points to define its purposes and to avoid leaving any discretion to the administrators of the law, and in the enormous range of discretion left to the administration on other points, with utterly inadequate provision made to ensure that such discretion shall be exercised on adequate information and competent advice. Pages of an Act are devoted to explanations on such points as when an organization is a reorganization and when a dividend is not a dividend, and most specific rules are laid down for the guidance of the Commissioner on such matters, yet a brief clause in the Act may be the sole authority of and the sole limitation on the Commissioner in dealing with subjects of vast importance.



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That the impossibility of dispensing with discretion in administration is realized by some in Congress, but not by others, is indicated by the following colloquy between members of the Senate Committee investigating the Bureau of Internal Revenue: —

SENATOR COUZENS. — But we want to know what the questions are at issue so we can pass a law to cover such cases, instead of leaving it discretionary.

SENATOR ERNST. — I tell you, Senator, you will not be able to pass a law or laws that will cover all the questions that will arise in these cases, even though you pass laws from now until the end of time.

## II

In the 1918 Act, in which the rates of tax ran as high as 82.4 per cent on corporations, deductions were authorized for a reasonable allowance for depreciation, based on the value of property at March 1, 1913. This simple clause implied the making or approving by the Commissioner of valuations of practically all the depreciable business property in the United States that was in existence at March 1, 1913: a problem in valuation far greater and of far more immediate and practical effect than the valuation of the railroads, on which the Interstate Commerce Commission and the railroads have spent upwards of ten years and upwards of $100,000,000 without completing the task. A provision for the amortization of the cost of war facilities entailed the even more difficult task of deciding what these facilities would be worth at some time in the future, and under conditions not easily capable of anticipation.

A clause allowing a deduction for depletion of natural resources implied a similar task of valuation as at March 1, 1913, in relation to the entire natural resources of the country; and in the 1921 Act this task was complicated by the allowance of a further deduction in determining the taxable income from operations of oil and mining properties, in respect of the appreciation in value resulting from the discovery of minerals in hitherto unproven areas. This allowance not only ran counter to the whole general theory of the law and placed the industries concerned in a specially favored position, but it also created an administrative task of the utmost difficulty.

The discretion given to the Commissioner in regard to methods of valuing inventories involved the decision whether millions of dollars should be accounted for as income in years in which they would be subject to a tax of 50 per cent or more, or in years in which they would be subject to little or no tax.

The burden of dealing with these problems was imposed on a Bureau that had been formed only a few years earlier and had been administering a tax so low — 1 or 2 per cent — as to be a matter of comparative indifference to taxpayers. Yet Congress created no new machinery to enable the Bureau to cope with its enormously increased burdens and responsibilities.

Not only do these and similar problems in taxation involve in the aggregate billions of dollars, but there are a large number of individual cases in which millions or tens of millions are involved. In such cases the taxpayer can afford to lavish money and skill on the study of every phase of the case, and on the development of a form of presentation that will bring out the strong and minimize or conceal the weak points. Consider for a moment the way in which these cases are finally decided: on the one side the taxpayer with millions at stake, familiar with every strength and weakness of

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his position, advised possibly by an expert whose compensation is contingent on results and who is therefore personally interested in the outcome to the extent of tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars; on the other side, the Government representatives without the skill, the time, or the organization to develop the case adequately, serving for a low salary, with little prospect in the way of promotion, with no interest in the result of the controversy except to avoid prejudicing their position in the Bureau, — unless, perchance, there be hope of appearing some day on the other side of the table for other taxpayers, — and possessing no element of strength except the power of decision. It is inevitable that, in a large number of cases, either the Government's representatives will be overborne by the weight of the taxpayer's case, which they are unable to answer, or that, realizing this inability but feeling that it may be due less to the validity of the taxpayer's contentions than to the inadequacy of the Government's means of refuting them, they will fall back on their power of decision and take an arbitrary position without attempting to justify it. In either case it is unlikely that even approximate justice will have been done.

It would be idle to suggest that the blame rightly attaches to Congress in all the many cases in which the Bureau of Internal Revenue has been subjected to legitimate criticism, just as it would be unfair to ignore the large amount of earnest, intelligent, and often really admirable work that has been performed in that Bureau.

In the circumstances outlined, however, a Senatorial investigation was hardly needed to show that the administration of the law has been far from perfect, or to prove that the administration has resulted in gross inequalities between taxpayers. It was obvious from the first that this must be so, but no more obvious than that the high tax laws were bound to operate with gross inequality, even if they could be perfectly administered. For instance: capital is a factor in producing income in almost every business activity, its influence varying in degrees by infinitely small gradations from practical insignificance to paramount importance. Yet in the Excess Profits Tax Law (1917) Congress attempted to draw an arbitrary line and to divide businesses into two classes, those in which capital is a material income-producing factor, and those in which it is not. Not only so, but it actually enacted the law in such a way that the minimum tax — 8 per cent — fell on income derived from every business falling on one side of the arbitrary line of cleavage, and the highest rate of all — perhaps 60 per cent — fell on those businesses which happened to lie just on the other side of the line. In doing so it enacted a provision which was bound to create the grossest inequalities.

All this, however, while regrettable, was largely inevitable and, viewed in its proper perspective, constitutes only one of the minor injustices of war. Why one taxpayer should retain 40 per cent and another 80 per cent of the profit he made out of the war is a trivial question compared with the question why either should retain any profit when the soldier in the line suffered hardship, injury, and possibly loss of life, for a mere pittance. The only possible answer is, in both cases, that those measures had to be adopted which seemed at the time most likely to expedite the winning of the war and the termination of the whole series of injustices that were its inevitable accompaniment. What is both regrettable and preventable is that six years after the Armistice so many of the

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important tax-controversies should be still unsettled, and that, in regard to personal income taxation at least, our law should still operate in the same hit-or-miss fashion, and with inequalities almost as great as any that existed in the height of war taxation.

In liquidating the assets of a business the course most commonly followed is to realize in the ordinary way as much of the assets as can be disposed of within a reasonable time, and then to get rid of the remnants by some unusual and sweeping procedure. This analogy might well have been followed in the settlement of war taxes; and there is little doubt that even now the disposition of the outstanding tax-cases of the war years on broad lines would prove far more beneficial, both to the Government and to the taxpayers, than the continuance of the present weary process, and would be likely to come just as near a theoretically correct solution. Competent and disinterested advisers have repeatedly suggested in the past the constitution of a commission of high quality and large powers to dispose of all pending tax-questions relating to the war years, and the suggestion still holds the field, as presenting the best prospect of a satisfactory solution of this problem which the war has left us.

The settlement of large tax-cases calls, not for fine distinctions and meticulous accuracy, but for breadth and soundness of judgment based on wide experience, and for courage, and it would have been advantageous to taxpayers and the Government alike if the major cases could have been dealt with promptly and finally by a body possessing those qualifications. The number of cases in which taxpayers have paid substantially more in taxes for the war years than they were prepared five years ago to pay is undoubtedly small compared with the number of cases in which they have paid, or will pay, far less than they would then gladly have paid in final settlement. Taxpayers in the aggregate have probably lost as much in expense and in diversion of thought and effort to tax matters as they have saved in taxes, and the country as a whole is the poorer, not only for this wasted effort, but for the demoralizing effects of tax controversies as they are now too often conducted.

## III

As regards current taxation: while the problems of valuation which have been referred to still remain, their importance in the case of corporations has become much reduced since the tax on corporations has been stabilized at the relatively low level of 12.5 per cent. In the field of personal income taxation, however, the rates of tax are still high enough to make the inequalities in its incidence a serious matter for those affected.

Here again is contradiction. One observes how wide the net is cast to catch even the smallest of fish, and next one observes how large are the holes through which even the big fish may escape.

The chief executive of a foreign company who passes through the United States on his way around the world is held up at his port of embarkation and, because during his stay in the country he has devoted a few days to calling on agents or customers of his firm and discussing business with them, is told that he must pay income tax on a corresponding proportion of his annual salary, as being income derived from sources within the United States. He might be pardoned for characterizing our system as closely approaching conformity to the first two definitions of Euclid, and consisting of a law having length without breadth, administered

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by persons having position but not magnitude.

A nurse, not yet naturalized, who upon going abroad with her employer finds that in case she might not come back she must pay fourteen dollars income tax, which she is assured will be refunded to her if she returns, and who is told on her return that there is no appropriation out of which her payment can be refunded, may not unnaturally feel that the United States is engaged in a rather petty business.

Nor, surely, could any doubts regarding the meticulous care with which the law is administered survive a reading of the recently published decision which, first holding that a cash allowance to an officer for uniforms was income to the recipient and the cost of the uniforms not an allowable deduction, went on to specify that epaulets and campaign bars were business expense, but cap devices and chin-straps were not.

Such cases indicate how wide is the net and how small the mesh. On the other hand, the recent publication of tax returns is in itself a sufficient demonstration of the size of the holes.

No one familiar with American business or social life, who has given even the most casual perusal to the published lists, can entertain any longer the belief that our present income-tax law possesses the basic justification of an income-tax system, that it levies taxation substantially in accordance with ability to pay. Any inferences that might be drawn from the published lists regarding an individual taxpayer might be wholly unfair, because under our system an individual of large regular income may have been liable for only a very small tax, by reason of capital losses or other factors determining his tax liability. But when name after name has set opposite it a tax figure which is ridiculously small in proportion to the obvious income and ability to pay of the taxpayer, even the most ardent advocates of the policy that has inspired our laws must admit that those laws have not up to now been effective in taxing large incomes with anything like the degree of universality and equality that is necessary to justify their existence and continuance.

Though the recent publication of tax returns has led to a clearer and more general realization of the inequalities of personal income taxation, it was not needed to demonstrate their existence.

As Secretary Houston said in his annual report for 1920: —

> Tax returns and statistics are demonstrating what it should require no statistical evidence to prove . . . the fact remains that to retain such rates in the tax law is to cling to a shadow while relinquishing the substance.

While the rates when he spoke were higher than those of to-day, his comment is still largely applicable. But though Secretary Glass and Secretary Mellon have taken the same stand, Congress has refused to heed their advice and has continued to impose high rates of tax which in fact are, broadly speaking, not paid as contemplated by Congress, except by those whose income is earned and those possessors of investment income who are unwilling to adopt ordinary methods of avoidance.

It may be worth while briefly to consider some of these methods.

## IV

Apart from the creation of trusts, the three principal methods of avoidance are, perhaps: investments in tax-exempt securities; losses, real or artificial; and the transfer of property to

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corporations that pay few or no dividends. The creation of trusts seems to stand on a somewhat different footing from the others, since it does involve the taxpayer's divesting himself of property, or at least of the income from property, though it may be in favor of a near relative.

Of the three remaining methods of avoidance, investment in tax-exempt securities is the surest, in that the protection it affords is based on the Constitution, and therefore the taxpayer resorting to it is not under the necessity of keeping a weather eye constantly lifting for any action of Congress that might affect his status. On the other hand, though the cost is small in proportion to the tax saved in the case of a wealthy man, it is nevertheless substantial.

Hence, while many prefer the freedom from both anxiety and tax which tax-exempt securities afford, and are willing to pay the price, others prefer to risk the hazards of the tax in an effort to secure immunity at low cost. And those who determine thus to venture into the labyrinth readily find daughters of Minos who know something of its secret and are willing to aid them; though, warned perhaps by the fate of Ariadne, they may insist that their reward be ample and well assured before that aid is given.

The success which has attended such efforts in the case of owners of investment income is notorious, and seems to have aroused the envy of some who have paid a higher price for immunity from tax by going into the tax-exempt field. Thus we have the spectacle of occupants of the invulnerable shelter of the tax-exempt stimulating and endeavoring to direct the attack on those who have found other and more precarious shelter.

In the 1924 law Congress largely deprived the second method, that of taking losses, of its efficiency by limiting the saving in tax in respect of losses to 12.5 per cent of the loss; before doing so, however, it limited the tax on capital gains to 12.5 per cent, thus abandoning the attempt to levy high surtaxes on this form of income.

The third method, of transferring property to corporations which pay few or no dividends, continues to flourish, notwithstanding that it has been the special objective of the attack of a large section of Congress. Each new Revenue Act has contained a new provision for taxing undistributed profits, but there is little reason to think that even the latest effort will prove generally effective.

It will be observed that these various methods of avoidance, as well as the limitation of tax on capital gains to 12.5 per cent, ease the burden on the capitalist, but afford no means of escape to those who derive their incomes from their own efforts or the products of their own brains, and not from accumulated capital. Indeed, among the many contradictions found in the law, perhaps the most striking of all is that under legislation admittedly framed, not with an eye single to fiscal requirements, but with the avowed purpose of striking at the rich, the burden of the tax should in actual operation fall most heavily on earners who have little or nothing in the way of accumulated savings; and that special relief should be granted, not to those who are adding to the wealth of the country by their researches, their inventions, and their toil, but to the beneficiaries of unearned increment and to those whose profits are derived from the exhaustion of the natural wealth of the country. True, Congress in the 1924 Act pretended to give relief to earners, as urged by Secretary Mellon, but the relief was so paltry as to be a mockery.

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Some optimists may think that patient revision of the tax laws would in the course of time suffice to make the present high rates generally effective and equal in their incidence; they can, however, have little conception of the actual working of this laborious process of trial and error. A hole in the law is detected and a provision is enacted for the purpose of stopping that hole. To the extent that the provision is retroactive the action taken may prove immediately effective, and as our tax laws from 1913 to date have been retroactive to the extent of a minimum period of six months in the case of the 1924 law, and a maximum period of fourteen months in the case of the 1913 law, the extent of this effectiveness may be considerable, though its justice may be open to question.

The first effect of such a provision — aside from possible retroactivity — is a temporary suspension of the class of activities aimed at, while the tax lawyers, who include in their numbers some of the keenest minds in the country, decide on a modified course of procedure that will avoid the letter of the provision. Once such a procedure is developed, it quickly becomes common property among the class affected. The Government, however, remains in ignorance of its adoption, perhaps, until it comes to light two or three years later, in the course of the review of the returns in which the effects of the new provisions of the law were expected to be made manifest. When this happens the dreary round begins again, and it will continue so long as Congress refuses to recognize what successive Secretaries of the Treasury of both parties have pointed out — that it is attempting the impossible.

The various revisions of Section 220 imposing a tax on undistributed profits have caused stockholders much anxiety but little or no taxes, and there are large groups of rich men on whom the high surtax rates have been not a direct but an indirect burden. Undoubtedly the indirect burdens have been substantial. One form of the burden is the loss of income resulting from substituting tax-exempt securities for other forms of investment yielding higher returns, another the cost of advice on methods of avoidance. Another form occurs where the taxpayer transfers his property to a corporation; in such cases the difference between the normal tax on individuals of 6 per cent and the corporation rate of 12.5 per cent, together with the capital-stock tax, which has been estimated to be equivalent to a tax of 1.5 per cent on income, may be regarded as in some measure a commutation of the surtax rates, and the amount, say 8 per cent, is not inconsiderable.

In this case the corresponding benefit does accrue to the Government, and the taxation of corporations at a rate substantially higher than that on individuals is perhaps the most practically effective measure for higher taxation of the rich that Congress has adopted, though not primarily designed for that purpose.

Undoubtedly, also, the reduction of the tax on capital gains to 12.5 per cent has resulted in large sums being taxed at that rate which had avoided, and would have continued to avoid, taxation at the regular surtax rates. Taxpayers controlling sources of income who were unwilling to take steps that would subject them to high surtaxes have consummated transactions that have resulted in their receiving as capital gains substantially what they were unwilling to receive as regular income. The capital gains reported in returns of over $1,000,000 in 1922 were greater than the entire net income reported in such returns in 1921.

Apart from their indirect effects and

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regarded solely as surtaxes, however, it is not putting the case too strongly to say that the higher rates have been as capricious and generally ineffective in their incidence as personal property taxes ordinarily are. So far as they have been effective they have fallen — and still fall — most heavily on earned income. Indeed, as advisers such as Dr. T. S. Adams pointed out to the committees in charge of the 1924 bill, the reduction of 25 per cent in respect of earned income, which was urged by Mr. Mellon, would not have put its beneficiaries in a preferred position, but would merely have helped to redress the discrimination against them which in practice resulted from the 1921 law and continues to-day.

## V

The question has been and will be asked, why the high surtaxes should not be made more generally effective. It is impossible to deal fully with this question in a short article, but the basic reason is the elusive and Protean character of income. When and in what amounts income arises from a series of transactions are largely questions of opinion and business practice — questions, moreover, which cannot be satisfactorily answered unless the substance rather than the form is allowed to control the decision.

Great Britain attains a certain measure of success by restricting its taxation to recurring income, and laying down only very broad principles, which are administered by a highly trained and relatively well-paid civil service, vested with a very wide discretion. We, in reaching out for more, aiming perhaps at a higher ideal, have only too often, in Secretary Houston's language, 'grasped the shadow and missed the substance.'

Further, the attempts to set forth in legislation what precise transactions of a nonrecurring character give rise to taxable income result mainly in the great bulk of essentially similar transactions taking a slightly different form, not covered by the letter of the law.

If the maximum tax on individuals were reduced to a rate reasonably close to the corporation income-tax rate, wholesale avoidance would cease, simplicity would become possible, and the law would acquire that substantial equality of incidence and that universality which it now so completely lacks. Such a policy, it is believed, would be entirely compatible with the fiscal requirements of the United States and, like the reduction in tax on capital gains to 12.5 per cent, would bring under the surtaxes large amounts of income which up to now have escaped them.

Even, however, if surtaxes be substantially reduced, we should recognize that in some future emergency high taxes on income may become a national necessity, and should endeavor to put our income-tax system on a basis which would enable high tax-rates to be levied more simply, more equitably, and more effectively than has been accomplished under recent and existing laws.

Prohibition of future issues of tax-exempt securities is clearly one of the first and most important requirements to this end. No part of the nation's wealth should be in the position in which tax-exempt securities now are, that of being immune from taxation in any national emergency, however great.

A marked advance would also be made if a clearer conception and a closer agreement could be reached on just what is income and when it emerges. At present commercial and accounting ideas on these questions are at variance with the judicial



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decisions, with the economists holding still different views. Much of the inconsistency and vacillation in the income-tax administration may be attributed to differences between the legal and the accounting schools of thought, and to fluctuations in the degree of influence exercised by members of the two schools.

Our general theory of income taxation differs very materially from that of the much older British system, with which comparisons are most commonly made; but there is little reason to suppose that the differences are the result of careful consideration leading to the conviction that our methods are sounder, more practicable, or better adapted to our conditions. If our legislators found their inspiration in England, the home of the income tax, it must have been in the maze of Hampton Court, not at Somerset House.

Great Britain, it must be realized, possesses a number of natural advantages in imposing income taxation, such as the single Parliament, the absence of any constitutional limitations, the compactness and homogeneity of its territory; it also has the advantages of experience and a long-established civil service of high quality and traditions. Further, its income-tax system antedates the modern industrial development, which, therefore, in its growth has adapted itself to an existing income-tax scheme, whereas we are imposing an income-tax law on an already highly developed industrial and commercial organization. Those who have studied the proceedings of the last British Commission to report on income tax will appreciate how important a factor this is considered to be by British income-tax authorities. In these circumstances, the fact that British taxation has been restricted as it has possesses a special significance. It is only fair to point out that our freedom from tradition perhaps makes us more ready to deal with new issues in novel ways; and that our tax law, for instance, seems to be a distinct advance over the British on such matters as relief from double taxation, reciprocal exemption from taxation of international transportation, and taxation of income from international trade in general.

At present our law is being developed by court decisions dealing with single aspects of the question, the taxpayers' views on which are usually presented fully and skillfully with a view to securing the decision and without regard to the effect on the law as a whole. The Government's counsel have neither the time nor the technical advisers to enable them to present such cases in their proper relation to the whole subject of income tax, if indeed they are able to present the particular aspect involved in any given case with a skill or thoroughness approaching that of their opponents.

Court decisions, moreover, are governed largely by earlier decisions, rendered in a comparatively early stage of our commercial development and under conditions wholly unlike those now existing.

If the income-tax law could be taken out of politics and a body created in which the legislature, the administration, the interested professions, — law, engineering, and accounting, — the business world, the economists, and the individual taxpayers could all be represented, a new and sounder understanding of the problem might be attained, which would be of permanent value to the country.

If we cannot revise our income-tax system on its present lines so as to make it reasonably equitable and simple, and so as to rid us of methods of avoidance that are demoralizing to taxpayers and that make a mockery of the law, let us

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seek some new approach to the whole question. No better time could be selected for such a search than the present, when the country is prosperous and the Treasury overflowing, and yet the memories of the problems of war taxation are fresh in our minds.

## VI

Summing up these reflections, the chief evils of our income-tax situation are, perhaps: the unsettled taxes for the war period, an unsound surtax-system, and a law that attempts to be too specific on some points while leaving far more important decisions on other points to the administration — these last two leading to bewildering complexity, to wholesale and successful avoidance, and hence to gross discrimination.

The suggestions to which they lead are neither novel nor revolutionary; they are, first: that even now a commission to clear up the old war-taxes would be desirable; second: that, unless and until surtaxes at the present rates can be administered with a reasonable degree of equality and generality of application, they should be reduced to a level at which those essentials of a sound tax-system can be attained; and third: that the issue should be taken out of politics and a highly competent, nonpartisan body should be created, — quite distinct from any body created to deal with the war taxes, — in which the various elements of our community interested or able to make valuable contributions would be represented, to study the whole subject and to suggest revisions of our general scheme to make it simpler and more effective, and particularly to fit it for the strains that may require to be imposed on it in some great emergency in the future.

To accomplish this end we must impart breadth to the law instead of making it an ever longer and more intricate maze. If, further, we could revise our civil service, so as to make it appeal to men of greater magnitude than we can possibly hope to attract and hold — except in a small number of cases — under our present system, we should have laid the foundations of a sound income-tax system, which would be the mainstay of the Federal fiscal policy in normal times and would be invaluable in times of emergency. The only losers would be those 'taxperts' who look forward to a long run of the present tragi-comedy, in which they may profitably play the rôle of Ariadne to the Dædalus of Congress.

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# POPULATION AND THE FUTURE

BY ROBERT SENCOURT

## I

To look into the future is not always an idle fancy or a wasteful foolishness. Where facts can guide us it is an occupation extraordinarily interesting and more worth our while than most things, for it is, after all, rapidity of information that wins the general his battle and makes the dealer's fortune on Wall Street. And so with populations: information about them guides the man of business and the politician, and it completes the equipment of the woman of culture; she can hear of the future more surely than from a palmist, and see pictures of it clearer than in a crystal; the practical man or woman can form conclusions which are of the highest political importance, and make them at once a base for thought, for suggestive talk, for action. The parchment of fate unrolls.

It is now nearly a hundred years since great leaders of English thought, like Macaulay and Disraeli, grasped the fact that by this time America would be the greatest country in the world. They realized eighty or ninety years ago that in 1925 she would have a population pretty nearly as big as all Europe's was then; and down the inclined snow-field the ball gathers mass and momentum. The people of destiny are well aware that by the end of the century the United States, which is both a nation and a league of nations, will be far beyond the rivalry of any other people in the world. But what will be happening in Europe? Europe has become more and more interesting to America ever since Columbus taught us that the Atlantic was an invitation to a voyage. He gave freedom to America by opening up a virgin continent; he gave freedom to America by opening up to her the continent in which men had stored more treasures of their minds than Nature was keeping in reserve for them in what they called the New World. The nineteenth century made the exploits of Columbus a new reality; the children of the Pilgrim Fathers enriched their intellectual and spiritual freedom by turning their Mayflowers toward the sunrise. America invited achievement; Europe exhibits it. Radiating from earth's Eternal City, a succession of towns and masterpieces makes the man and woman of to-day the heirs of all the ages. All travel is a sort of pilgrimage.

> Visions of the past
> Sustain the heart in feeling
> Life as she is.

History is not a dead chronicle, but a living extension of the present. And in the story of the past we can even read the future. The future of humanity is too interesting to be mathematical; we must leave to the astronomer the precision of telling us the day and hour when the moon will darken, or the comet throw its trail of light among the stars. Figures in such a connection are only signposts — they are not automobiles. They point the direction —



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they do not explore the untraveled region. Let us value them for what they are, and take the populations of Europe in the year America chose as her standard for the immigration laws.

In 1889 the leading countries of Europe were as follows: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Russia | 88,205,353 |
| Germany | 46,855,704 |
| Austria-Hungary | 40,348,215 |
| France | 38,218,903 |
| Great Britain and Ireland | 37,453,574 |
| Italy | 30,260,865 |
| Spain | 17,358,404 |

Of the other countries none had much more than five millions.

| | |
|---|---|
| Belgium | 5,974,743 |
| Rumania | 5,500,000 |
| Portugal | 4,708,178 |
| Greece | 1,979,453 |

Now to what extent does that order determine the relative position of European nations? And if that order is not the important order, why not?

The first point is that Great Britain was simply the centre of a league of nations, and that her wealth, her power, and the trade following her flag were beyond all proportion to her actual population. Instead of being fifth on the list she was in reality the first. Her organization, her invested capital, her security and stability gave her people a power greater than their numbers; and in doing so they enabled those numbers to increase till they are now about 25 per cent more. Of her dependencies one is as big as the United States, and has a population seven times her own. England reaped the advantage of their development. British capital, British enterprise, and British patriotism were reaping a harvest from a ground on which, as we often used to hear, the sun never sets. With that power, and increase of power, neither France nor Austria-Hungary could compete.

Germany did compete. If England's population increased by about a quarter, Germany's increase was more than three quarters. Genius at first awoke her national spirit, and her national spirit realized itself in industrial organization. No country except Austria-Hungary was ever so well governed as Germany.

While England owed her accretion of power to her Empire, Germany owed hers to having not much by way of possessions overseas. She came into the field too late to take up colonies. She could concentrate on her own *Reich*. The wonderful organization of the German Reich made the war possible, for it made Germany independent of the millions of Russia. Those millions had been increasing in the same proportion to Germany's increase as Germany's to Great Britain's. While in 1914 Germany's population was 85,000,000, Russia's had grown to 150,000,000; but though Russia had a bureaucracy she lacked an organism. A few years of war, and Russia was chaos. Like a malignant excretion, she had been ejected from the constitution of Europe. She no longer counts in the comity of nations. Breed as they will, the millions of Russia remain, like the millions of India or of China, totally inadequate to exert a power in proportion to their hordes. It is the 77,000,000 of Japan, not the 450,000,000 of China, which interest America in the Far East. Russia is an analogy to India, on the new boundary of Europe. In her present state she does not really count, and it would be guesswork to say when she will. Back in 1890 her vast numbers meant next to nothing so far as the Europe of to-day is concerned; and in a country where the freedom of organized society counts for so little, prudent calculations are impossible. No other country is in that position.

Even if we take what was the Empire of Austria-Hungary and consider how

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it is dismembered to-day, it does not elude all means of calculation, for long ago everyone knew that it was a collection of nations with seventeen languages and thirty-three religions; and those who care for facts know to-day that its dismemberment cannot destroy the economic unity of its new constituents. It never was a unity — yet in some sense it always will be one. When the war began, the population was roughly 51,000,000, and, being excellently governed, it made with Germany a mass so strong that Russia's 150,000,000 and France's 39,000,000, even with the aid of Belgium, could not hold up against them. First the British Empire, then Italy, then America was needed to turn the scale; and we can leave Italy out, for her 34,000,000 balanced roughly with the 26,000,000 of Turkey and the 7,000,000 of Bulgaria.

## II

The rise of Germany shadows with terrible distinctness the outstanding fact in the populations of Europe — the dynamic fact that the figure for France is stationary. The extraordinary gravity of that paralyzed figure is one to startle any practical imagination which concerns itself with the future history of Europe.

In 1870 France lost in Alsace-Lorraine about two millions of her inhabitants. She could do practically nothing to repair the damage. As the time of war approached, her population almost continuously tended to decline. The war was a terrible strain on her men. In June 1918 one saw hardly an able man in any of her streets; the number of the killed was over a million and a half. Between 1913 and 1921 the population of France declined by about two millions, a situation which she was able to remedy by regaining her lost provinces, with their comfortable margin of birth-rates over death-rates. But the stagnation continues. The sinister tendency becomes even more marked. *In the second quarter of 1924 the surplus of births over deaths was 10,000 less than in the corresponding quarter of 1923.* In the first half of 1924 the whole surplus was only 3655; it was less than one in a thousand. It means that the year 1924 will be several thousand short of the number necessary to make up the death-loss between 1913 and 1921; for to recover those two millions, even in twenty years, the surplus of births over deaths would have to be ten thousand a year. And even if it were that, France would still be in only a stationary position, while every one of her neighbors is growing steadily to a gigantic size. Germany, her Teutonic rival, and Italy, her Latin one, are each increasing or promising to increase by half a million a year. Italy already equals her; in another twenty-five years Germany will be double. That is the startling fact that stands out from calculations of the numbers of men in Europe.

It is more startling because in France trade is still booming, and there is hardly a man unemployed. In fact, she must bring in foreigners to get her work done; two millions of them are now living on her soil. But she cannot get them to atone for the children her people fail to have. Very few of those immigrants take up French citizenship; most of them are Italians, Spaniards, or Poles, and they have loyalties of their own. Some of them are even Germans. Besides that, they will take any step they possibly can to avoid the obligations of military service to France, both for themselves and for their children. Those long, unpleasant, often brutalizing years are a horrible slice taken out of the time a young man might give to establishing himself. But even if the immigrants were ready

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to incorporate their lives and those of their families into the life of the French nation, France would no longer be quite the France she is. They would modify the distinct quality which that great country has built up in the long centuries of her unity; they would weaken the stamp she gives them. France would cease to be France if foreigners solved the problem of giving her people to her.

There are two factors of almost equal importance in the resulting paralysis of population: the birth-rate is as low as the death-rate is high. In England the birth-rate is 23.1 per thousand and the death-rate is 13.7; that leaves a surplus of 9.4. In France the surplus is only 0.3, because the death-rate is 18.4 and the birth-rate is 18.7.

Why such a death-rate and why such a birth-rate? It is now a hundred and twenty years since an Episcopal clergyman, Malthus, wrote the famous book that no one reads; if people read it they would know that he did not advocate artificial restraint of population. What he did say was that the means of deliberate decrease of population were celibacy, wars, infanticide, and vicious practices; and he noted as indirect checks such things as unwholesome occupations, severe labor, and exposure to the seasons, extreme poverty, bad nursing of children, large towns, excesses of all kinds, the whole train of common diseases and epidemics, plagues, and famine, as well as the indirect effects of war. How France has suffered from the war we have seen; but the war is over and the difficulty is not solved. Celibacy affects some fifty thousand of her adults — priests and nuns. Neither as regards public health and sanitation, climate, want, nor large towns, is France at a disadvantage with her neighbors. Infanticide is unknown. The high death-rate must be due either to a certain weakness in the constitution of the people — which it is not — or to a lack of sufficient care of children. It is in fact intimately connected with the cause of the low birth-rate.

The reason why France cannot cope with Germany and Italy is because the French people do not care enough for children. They have managed to divorce the natural attraction of men and women from the instinct for family life, and since the days of Malthus medical knowledge has provided them with the means of evading the natural — but to their unnatural taste the unwelcome — consequences of natural passion, by which in happier beings the supreme principles of love and life are consummated in unity. That is the peril for France, from which conscription could not save her in the past, and from which neither airplanes and submarines nor plagues and poisons are likely to be able to defend her in the future. Her militarists look into the future; but a genius for war cannot compensate a race for a lack of surviving children.

Soldiers and politicians have alike realized it. And that, as much as the patriotism of priests, is the reason why, after the war, the Catholic Church regained the position that she had had in the country a few years before the war. The Catholic Church, as is well known, is absolutely uncompromising in condemning contraceptives. Her laws on that subject express the instincts, and the prudence, of a society which loves life. To the question, Will you commit suicide? the Catholic Church answers, 'No. I do not wish my people to fight; I wish to preserve them not only in the unseen world but in this present world, so that they can enjoy even material well-being; and I wish to preserve them and increase them from generation to generation.' But the Catholic principle is more than an instinct of self-preser-

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vation. As to tell the truth is the object of speech, so generation is in the order of nature the result of a consummated and sanctified natural attraction; and to interfere with this august scheme is, according to her, a grievous sin, at all times and in all circumstances.

But the Catholic Church is not strong enough in France to save the people as a whole, and it is interesting to consider what may save them. It is true that population is not the real measure of national greatness.

> Circles are praised, not that abound
> In largeness, but the exactly round.

And the spirit of France is still great. One of her generals won the war. She found in it a literary inspiration which gives enduring value to the writings of such men as Psichari and Paul Bourget. Her politicians dominated Europe after the war. In Anatole France she gave the world a master of the arts of comedy and style. Bergson is, but for Santayana, the most literary of philosophers. Her people are industrious, thrifty, and courageous. A magnificent tradition of cultured life and order inspires her educated classes. Her airplanes and submarines make her feared by all her neighbors. Her capital is the favorite resort of Americans in Europe. Her industries are extraordinarily prosperous, and a spirit of enterprise has given new resources to the French merchants.

France is still great. In wealth, in power, in spiritual fervor, in intellectual activity, in patriotic enthusiasm, she is now a greater country than Germany. She is in much the same position as Germany was eighty or a hundred years ago. A literary and scientific life prepared for Germany's political, commercial, and industrial expansion during the nineteenth century. The names of Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Humboldt, Fichte, Hegel, Niebuhr, Ranke, and Heine are reminders enough of the promise of life in Germany. And it is possible that France may keep her place among the advancing competitors. But as we look back at Germany's rise, we see that it could not have been accomplished without an adequate birth-rate: and it is significant that the French as a nation have not such confidence in their stock that they can increase it like their neighbors.

## III

What a contrast in Italy! Some used to think that the Latins were worn out; but Italy arises exulting in all the exuberance of youth. An Italian connected America with Europe; an Italian gave America a European name. Italy is the America of European nations to-day. America shakes her invincible locks and bounds forward in the young confidence of untrammeled action. Italy is younger still, and hardly less eager, for her new unity is the inheritor of ancient achievement; she is young with the youth of eternity. A magnificent stock grows up on the sides of her mountains, and pullulates on her northern plains, and crowds the thoroughfares among her famous monuments. She maintains the traditions of her genius: Garibaldi, Gioberti, Mazzini, Cavour, Manzoni, Leopardi, Verdi, Villari — these are dead; but Mussolini, Perosi, Marconi, and, not least, Pope Pius XI, are alive and creative. Italy is now one of the most prosperous of European countries. She has neither steel for wars nor coal and iron for industry, but she has a healthy, happy, and prolific people. Her population, increased at the Armistice by two millions from Austria-Hungary, is now equal to that of France. The birth-rate is 31.3; the death-rate is 19.2. Italy is increasing, therefore, at the rate of over four hun-

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dred thousand a year. France's figures are 'a fen of stagnant waters'; Italy's are the rushing of a river in rocky mountains. If France's future in figures fills her admirers with apprehension, it is apprehension that Italy's prospects inspire in her rivals.

For, though unemployment is unknown in Italy, Italy can no longer occupy the increasing number of her people. For years they have spread their tradition of cheerful and thrifty industry all over the Western world. Their colonies, whether in Libya or on the Red Sea, do not count — they provide for less than a hundred thousand. The Italian immigrant invades other countries. In them he disturbs the labor market, cuts down wages, sends money out of the country, and prefers to keep his nationality. That does not make him a welcome immigrant, least of all in a country where another race and religion have been dominant, and where another tradition has been developed. America knows it. Italians began to inundate the United States twenty years ago. In 1903 the number was 197,855; in 1905 it was 316,797; and afterward it settled down to about 250,000. Nor did Italians go only to the States. In 1876 the total of emigrants was about 100,000; in 1886 it was more than 200,000; in 1896 it was more than 300,000; in 1906 it was nearly 800,000. The Americas have always been the happiest hunting-grounds of this prolific people, and the new immigration laws are a terrible blow to them. Those laws are especially felt in the provinces that were Austrian, which sent out a type more welcome to Anglo-Saxon America and more at home there. This applies to a population roughly equal to that of Greece.

But the Italian emigrates not only to the New World. There are, as we have seen, more than half a million in France itself; there are hundreds of thousands in Egypt; and in France's African colonies they outnumber the French colonists themselves. They refuse either to go or to sacrifice their nationality. We can see how soon the surplus of populations becomes a political question.

Indeed, the rise of the Italian population offers an extraordinarily interesting and suggestive prospect. It means not only that Italy will become the dominant power on the Mediterranean and so can practically command the Suez Canal; it means not only that she can throttle the Adriatic, and so enclose Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia, but also Austria and Hungary. It hints that she can sway Northern Africa, and promises that in the development of the Americas she will play the great part that the names of Amerigo Vespucci and Columbus begin to suggest to her. Birth will out. The English-speaking peoples will not have everything their own way, any more than the Gauls. And in this connection a great political movement of the two especially Latin nations is already developing. Italy begins to cultivate Spain. Their languages are almost intelligible to one another. Their interests do not clash. Between them the two countries could enclose the southern expansion of France from the Gulf of Lyon. The clouds of national storm which burst upon the Carpathian and the Rhine will gather next over the Mediterranean. Between them, Italy and Spain can develop the immense wealth of the Spanish republics, and make with themselves a league of nations from Chihuahua to Cape Horn, the United States of Central and South America. Brazil, the greatest of those States, a country with subjects more than half as many again as Spain herself, and a territory many times as great, is, it is true, neither Spanish nor Italian. She will be in the

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New World the one reminder of the greatness of Portugal in the age of Vasco da Gama and Camoens. But she will not interfere with the unity of the Latin world. Little decrepit Portugal may even find a new life in the reviving grandeur of Spain and the new growth of United Italy.

Already the populations of Spain and Italy are practically equal to that of Germany; they are more than half as much again as that of France or of England; they are developing a national consciousness equal to their populations. Spain, too, has her great men. Alfonso, Rivera, Ibañez, are names known to every crowd in the world. And they are the centre of some very interesting groups, and some fascinating developments of ideas.

If the Spaniards can maintain a temper of character and spirit equal to the growth of their numbers, they will be great indeed. Going on at the rate they are going now, Spain and Italy will in twenty-five years' time be one of the most important combinations in Europe, and they will complement one another. The interior population of Spain will increase over her wide area; that of Italy will spread in other countries; and meanwhile South America will be showing enormous advances of their influence. In the United States the birth-rate is 22.3; in the Argentine, 42.6; in Chile and Paraguay, 37.0.

This glorious prospect of growth in the Latin people fills them with a tranquil exhilaration: a triumphant celebration of the meaning of love and life in the unrolling generations, a deep sense of the promise of ages. 'Leaguing with old Rome, young,' — in the phrase of Herbert Trench, — they look with pride from eternity to eternity; and it is significant that the last English poet to live in Italy should sing a new philosophy of the unity of developing generations. Man cannot die. The mother is heavened in the souls of her children.

> It is the race creates our soul
> By touches many-fingered.
> . . . . . .
> Forms of the half-seen sacred families
> Bearing, and yet unborn;
> Seeking and ever seeking the perfect flower.

Such is the philosophy of Trench's poems. And in another he writes, apostrophizing the race of the world: —

> The thing unborn bursts from its husk,
> The flash of the Sublime unsheathes.
> They strove, the Many and the One,
> And all their strivings intervolved
> Enlarged thy Self-Dominion.

That romance and mystery of unfolding life Trench learned from Italy. It is not an idle phrase that Italy represents to-day the American spirit in Europe.

## IV

In England that great enthusiasm which thrilled to the word of Empire before the death of Victoria is stifled. There was indeed in the great commercial development of Victorian England something grossly and wickedly wrong: it was that irresponsibility about the increasing population which makes it doubtful to-day if England's surplus is entirely an advantage, or whether the peril threatening France is not before her in another guise. Rome declined and fell before hordes of barbarian strangers. Every year several hundreds of thousands of strangers arrive in Great Britain, landing in the cradles. Can she or can she not make them a part of her life? If not, the population-returns will mean a greater danger to her than Goth or Hun invasions. The problem of sex will be more sinister than ever before.

It was for long supposed that England had dealt with this difficulty, and the Victorians persuaded themselves and others that it no longer existed.

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'Their object — and it was wholly laudable — was,' says Mr. Harold Nicholson, 'to discover some middle course between the unbridled licentiousness of previous ages and the complete negation of the functions and purposes of nature. For although they repudiated the voluptuousness of their fathers, although their first editions of Byron were kept, with the French engravings, in a locked drawer, yet no average Victorian — and it is curious how many of them rallied to the average — was so narrow-minded as to preach the complete, the absolute mortification of the flesh. The doctrine of original sin savored of the dissenters, or at least of the evangelicals. Asceticism would be not only difficult, but even dangerous. It was essential, it was *right*, that the British race should be propagated. With a sigh of hope and of relief they decided that this biological necessity could be elevated into a moral, nay, even a civic virtue. And in this way they evolved the ideal of the English home.'

Americans and all foreigners have thought that ideal was established forever in England. But is the English home a reality? In the upper classes it hardly is, for the parents see so little of their children; the boys hardly know their fathers. But the upper classes hardly ever have large families. England is increasing from her lower classes, and to them, as a whole, the English home has never been more than a dream. Two or three generations of bad housing, of evil surroundings, of daily confinement in stuffy and clamorous offices and workshops, do not produce the happy children of a home. And there are always between one million and two million for whom England cannot find employment.

In England and Germany that question of unemployment is tragically acute; and it is the foundation of the population question. If England cannot maintain the people she produces, she must export them. But the old passion for emigration, which made the British Empire, hardly exists to-day. England's population inhabits the long lines of unventilated sordidness, and learns no enterprise from the dead monotony of its surroundings and the mechanical round of its work. And, besides that, it tends to shirk the constricted responsibilities of its class. In the opinion of Mr. Lloyd George, the dole has reached a rate where a man prefers idleness to labor. In Great Britain there are 400,000 youths between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight who are not in the real sense 'unemployed,' for they never have been employed; they have never learned to work. The war disorganized England's economic system; it demoralized her masses; and so her increase of population means not an increase but a decrease of her power. Every man who produces more than he consumes is an asset to a country; every man who consumes more than he produces burdens her. England and Germany at present have well over a million people producing nothing at all. Germany is better off because her people, employed or unemployed, live on considerably less. Britain's problem is eased by her enormous reserves of wealth. But though she has an annual surplus equal to that of Italy, the spirit of her masses does not at present enable her to take advantage of it. The masses of her women are almost criminally wasteful; nowhere is digestible food or household thrift more rarely seen. The women of England, in their unwillingness to work, to save, to guide, are their country's greatest peril.

The future of Britain, which involves so much of the world, depends on her power to find an effective meaning in one of two words, aristocracy or

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democracy. She must find a brain which can meet the needs of her people, and persuade them to vote for it. In Mr. Lloyd George she has a genius; but she threw him over. He and Mr. Winston Churchill have the two most American minds in Europe. They can generate ideas and make them vivid with color, afterward correlating them with facts. But it seems that the party they stood for is disappearing from English politics.

## V

In Germany the response to leadership is more solid. But the resources are far more impoverished; the demoralization, taking another form, has gone to even worse extremes. At present the German trader is neither so honest nor so obliging as the English; and courtesy is enterprise. Germany too, then, must export her people unless she proves that in thrift and work they can outdo their neighbors in the common market. If they do, nothing will keep them under. Thrift is irresistible as the driving power of an organized nation. Given thrifty and busy millions, a developed country is as certain to attain to greatness as it is certain to decline without an adequate birth-rate. France has thrift, but not a due surplus of babies. Germany has both. The Germans, after ten years' internment in their country, are sallying forth from it once more. Once again, birth will out. If they are not organized internally to capture markets, and immigration laws are not sufficiently favorable to them in the English-speaking world, they will compete with the Latins in Spanish America. It is all that is left for them, and nowhere would their virtues reap a richer harvest. At present, however, there is no opening for them even there: the immigrant required is the laborer, and the Italian is a cheaper laborer in that climate. It is possible that Germany will colonize the new unknown — Russia.

We saw that thirty-five years ago the order of populations in Europe was: Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, England, Italy, Spain. It is now: Germany, Great Britain (without Ireland), France, Italy, Poland, Spain; and of these Great Britain, France, and Italy are practically equal. The populations are as follows: —

| | |
|---|---|
| Germany | 65,500,000 |
| Great Britain | 40,560,588 |
| France | 40,000,000 |
| Italy | 38,500,000 |
| Poland | 30,000,000 |
| Spain | 21,300,000 |

Next to these comes Rumania, swelled now to comprehend 17,000,000, and with the highest birth-rate in the world, 46.0, so that she is increasing almost as rapidly as Italy.

That order corresponds very closely to their relative power; in fact, it would correspond almost exactly to their power, but for the fact that Europe was disturbed a few years ago by an outside influence, the influence of America. In 1917 America decided that she would handicap Germany; the result was that Russia collapsed, Austria-Hungary was shattered, Germany reeled. And in the future development of Europe it must be remembered that America by loans of money can help, as in the last resort of war she can disorganize, the developments of European nations. In estimating the growth of European countries and populations, Germany did not estimate an influence from over the Atlantic. And in future years a projection of that power could again silence prophecy.

But the prophet's tale is not yet finished; knowledge is not yet silent on the quivering tongue. In spite of America's reserve of decision, in spite of all the complexities of human life which

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will ever mock at mathematics, tendencies have been observed, and they are real. Europe, it is true, is getting full; but even Europe is not yet crowded out. France invites a new constructive invader over her borders. Italy nourishes her millions. Spain has open plains. Poland and Rumania are making a rapid increase of their many millions.

But the question is — England and Germany. When we look at the figures, when we consider in the one case the wealth and organization and in the other the thrift and efficiency, we realize that the promise of power in Europe is still very largely unaffected by the disturbing accident of the war. But at the same time sinister influences are at work in those two countries. The burden of unproductiveness is a heavy one, and in any case the migration must be large. Can the United States absorb it? Apparently not. Very well — it will go elsewhere. The British Empire will develop; but it will develop more slowly, because of its strong inclination for Britishers and Britishers only of a certain type which is less and less easy to find. Germans probably and Latins certainly will crowd to Latin America.

The figures of European populations become prophetic of the increasing greatness of the Latin world, attracting and absorbing also immigrants from other races. They open up a prospect in which the English-speaking peoples, far-flung and firmly established, will develop, even within the British Empire, the American tradition, and maintain a long supremacy. But beside them another civilization will grow even faster, speaking the languages on the lips of Columbus, and closely bound to the living traditions of Old Rome, which live in a perennial freshness and call forth a new and abounding life.

# BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON

BY HENRY W. BUNN

## I

If the quidnuncs are to be trusted, upon a retrospect of developments since 1914 the only rational proceeding is to seat yourself by the nearest Babylonish waters — as the Hudson, the Thames, the Spree, or the Seine — and howl. But the quidnuncs — that is, the editors, the publicists, the orators, the politicians, the efficiency experts, and the like, those poor relations of the Philistine, that 'surd and earless generation' — trust them not!

As a matter of fact, there is a deal more reason for satisfaction than for repining in the history of the last decade. The world has been turned upside down; but 't was high time. Suppose the hardening process after the formulas of the Victorian Age to have continued; anything, even another Genghis Khan, rather than that. Indeed, the philosopher's one regret is that the *bouleversement* was not thorough enough.

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Prussianism, regimentation on the apiary model, was not discredited as it would have been had Foch proved less humane and the war been fought *à outrance*. The dismemberment of Prussia, with restoration of their ancient autonomy to the component parts, was clearly 'indicated'; but in the interest of sizable Reparations the opportunity was let slip. Another war will have to be fought to achieve that most desiderable of desiderata for the Reich and for the world.

On the other hand, that divine damsel, Self-Determination, was unchained and given 'ample room and verge enough,' with results on the whole satisfactory, though not without a tincture, to put it sweetly, of *niaiserie*. Art — including an art of gracious living — thrives and bourgeons only under conditions of national liberty and pride. The prospect for European art is considerably enlarged and brightened through the emancipation of the Poles, the Czechs, the Letts (who have a genius for music), and other subject and talented races.

The pedants still assert that the Austro-Hungarian Empire was 'necessary,' and they now insist that its restoration, or an allotrope thereof, is a necessity. To the contrary, Austria is to be felicitated on the new state of things. Large parts of Austria's energies had been expended on a work of anticivilization, the holding in subjection of alien races quite capable of self-government and panting for liberty. Now those energies are released for the service of the arts and sciences, for which the Austrians have quite peculiar aptitudes. A greater glory should attend a lesser Austria. Vienna, you say, is too populous for the new conditions? Very like; but that can be remedied. Not to mention Malthusian Nature, there is the Argentine and — to avoid too plain speaking — there is the example of France. The international bankers and the big-business gentry will tear their hair at such heresies; let 'em tear. De-industrialize, de-commercialize, de-populate Vienna — observing due measure — and its atmosphere will not be the less suitable for the nouriture of your future Mozarts and Schuberts; an aspect alone deserving the consideration of the philosopher.

I opined that the world was fortunate in the bouleversement, and that the philosopher's only grievance was that the good old tune, 'The World Turned Upside Down,' was not played out to the last note. But in Russia and in Turkey it was, or very nearly so; and with results the happiest conceivable for mankind in general, if not precisely jolly for considerable numbers of Russians, Turks, and others.

Tsarism was done away — with circumstances and additaments sufficiently cruel, to be sure, but to be expected and perhaps of deterrent value against projects to revive the noisome thing. Thus the ground was cleared for the most astonishing and valuable experiment the world has known. It is a truism that human genius is seldom lacking to opportunity. Its existence thitherto unsuspected, tempestively it is discovered to be there. Some do say, however, that genius creates the opportunity. 'T is all one. They are pat to each other. Like Prince and Beauty, lobster and champagne, oil and graft, one presupposes t' other. But this of Lenin — or, rather, Lenin and his chief satellites, Trotsky, Dzerzhinsky, Stalin, and Chicherin, for supreme genius is, like the sun, the centre of a system — and the Bolshevist experiment is the 'singularest and superlative' piece in its kind since the creation. Say what you please of that strange crew — as that their hands drip with gore like a Tamerlane's, that

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they are liars beyond the cast of Catholic Ferdinand or Elizabeth or Tsz'e Hsi, that they are atheists, what not — the fact remains that with unexampled courage, singleness of purpose, disinterestedness, they set on foot and throughly prosecuted the experiment of all experiments that most behooved to be tried out. The experiment has failed; the episode should be ended incontinent. But Western Europe has thereby been saved the dreadful necessity of making that experiment. Better that Russia than that Britain or France or Italy or Germany should be the *corpus vile*. It should be added that the suffering and confusion in Russia incident to the experiment have probably not been greater than the Russians were in for anyway.

The idea is not too fantastic, that the primitive Russian folk subconsciously recognized their status as a corpus vile and acquiesced. From the earliest times of record the altruist has been in evidence, but singly, at most in petty groups; in this our country we have long had, as a Torquemada might say, altruists to burn, but scattered thinly over the terrain. Now for the first time a whole nation is discovered to be altruistic. The discovery might never have been made but for the Bolshevist experiment, and that experiment was a by-product of the war. Who then shall say that the world is not happy in the bouleversement? I cannot, however, repress the discomfortable feeling that Russian altruism would evaporate on reason supervening. The Red chiefs have shown a true instinct in forbidding free activity of the Russian so-called mind by feeding it with propaganda.

## II

Next to the developments of the past decade in Russia, those in the territory formerly known as the Ottoman Empire have been the most satisfactory. Everything has turned out precisely contrary to the expectations of the Christian Powers and favorably to Turkey. The Mudros Agreement, of November 1918, seemed definitely to mark the end of Turkey as an important Power; it marked, instead, the birth of the infinitely more important New Turkey. The vast Arabian provinces — the Arabian peninsula, Mesopotamia, Syria — were lopped away, but quite as much to the advantage of Turkey as to that of Araby. The Mudros Agreement and its legitimate (but frail and therefore happily named) child, the Sèvres Treaty, contemplated further loppings: Cilicia to France; Adana to Italy; Smyrna, with a great hinterland, and Eastern Thrace to Greece; and an Armenia to include the best part of Eastern Anatolia with corridors to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, the remnant of Anatolia to be divided into commercial spheres of influence for Britain, France, and Italy.

How it turned out is sufficiently familiar. The French scuttled out of Cilicia with a flea in their ear, the Italians out of Adana ditto; and finally the great Greek army turned tail before inferior forces and flew, pell-mell, helter-skelter, devil-take-the-hindmost, back to the wine-dark Ægean. Smyrna furnished the pyre of Greek imperialistic hopes. Pan may still pipe on Tmolus Hill and the valley of the Cayster resound as immemorially to the cries of waterfowl, but there will be no modern Homer to listen.

The Turks took over the principle of nationalism from the West and applied it with a wanion. Turkey is now completely Turkeyfied: a satisfactory consummation. (Chorus of howls from the waterside.) Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I note your protest. It is true that the business involved elimination

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of the Armenians; but that was found necessary. Say what you please, the Turks are not inhumane — only thorough. They did the best they could by the Armenians, providing them, as some Frenchman has put it, with a spiritual home. There are no longer any vexing minority questions in Turkey — a condition justifying the sacrifice of any number of Armenians; Europe, in this connection, might do well to take a leaf out of Mustapha Kemal's book. A certain sort of people complain that the Caucasian race and the Christian religion were dishonored by the Turkish success. As to religion, quite so, if one prefers Byzantine Christianity to Islam. As to the racial question, the so-called Turks are in fact Caucasians. In accordance with Mendelian law, the superior Mongoloid strain has been bred out, leaving, however, — so to speak, — its memory and perfume in certain traits of character. The Anatolian mixture is a happy one, like the British; there is in fact a close resemblance. When Sir Charles Harington and Ghazi Mustapha Kemal faced each other across the Bosporus, like the heroes in the *Iliad* they recognized their kinship, exchanged arms, and went each his way.

Yes, the Turks in the four years 1919–22 furnished out one of the most glorious episodes in human annals, and this opportunely when the Western nations, weary, disillusionized, faint in spirit, much required so inspiring an example.

## III

Since the destruction of Bagdad and the Abbasside Empire by the Mongols in 1258, the conception of Arabistan — that is, a free Araby of all the Arabs — must have titillated the *pia mater* of many an Arab, whether of the desert or the sown. The victories of Maude and Allenby made possible realization of that conception. The French and British Governments, by general declarations and by specific promises to King Hussein of Hejaz and his son Prince Feisal, were pledged to its realization. But these direct descendants of the Prophet were behind the times. They implicitly confided in the British word, which for so long had rightly passed current in the East, unaware that it was now subject to equivoque. They trusted the French as bosom allies of the British. The British mandates for Mesopotamia and Palestine, the French for Syria, undeceived them. Nevertheless, the dream of Arabistan is by way of realization. One would like to believe that the British had the grace quickly to recognize that mendacity is not the ticket; the true explanation, however, probably is that they found the Mesopotamian mandate too large an order. Whatever the explanation, they chucked that mandate and assisted Prince Feisal to set himself up as King of Irak. In return, they have a privileged position in that kingdom. But it is purely a business proposition; the Arab has taken the moral measure of the Frank.

The Syrian and Palestinian mandates have to be considered together. Both Briton and Frenchman have a stomachful, but neither, of course, will leave without the other. Ah! that conception of a terrestrial Zion! How fantastical beyond Momus, how mad beyond the inverted mentality of a Hatter or a March Hare! That the British should yield to the pressure of a vociferous minority of Jewry against common-sense, humor, honor, and the larger considerations of Oriental policy, sufficiently reveals the neurasthenic condition of the British Foreign Office. The British will do well to follow the advice of the Aga Khan and contrive the means to extricate themselves from so preposterous a situation.

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Arabistan? Politically, no doubt, the realization of the dream will be vague and dreamlike; for generations, perhaps forever, only the loosest sort of federation of states and tribal groups is to be expected, serving at most to emphasize the sense of common race and common traditions of glory. But there will be freedom; and freedom and the Arab were, one may say, made for each other. It follows from this intense passion for freedom that politically the centrifugal tendency is stronger in Araby than elsewhere on earth; nevertheless, the Arabs have shown themselves capable of great political combinations. Belike we shall see in the course of the rolling centuries a new phase of Arab civilization, not inferior to that of the golden Abbasside days. With restoration of the ancient irrigation-system Irak will support a numerous population. Again, perhaps, there will be poetry and learning and fun and a delightful art of living at Bagdad. Meantime our Fundamentalists will be well advised to study the methods of Ibn Saud and his Wahhabites of desert Nejd.

## IV

Viewing matters as I do from a plane so far above that of the quidnuncs, the calamity-howlers, I speak in a large and sæcular way. It has to be admitted that, viewed close, the human scene furnishes argument for howls; my object in this essay is to share with the world the benefit of my aerial speculation and to convert howls into pæans. I return to Russia; for in connection with Russia the happy results of the bouleversement are most obvious and vivid.

Russian industry has mostly been expunged, and in the process some hundreds of thousands of workmen have starved to death. That is not nice to contemplate, for in death by starvation there are no compensations as in death by hanging or drowning, either of which modes is said to be delicious. Moreover, cannibalism and murder have attended the process; and I have to confess that murder, except as a fine art, mislikes me and that, though Dean Swift's arguments for cannibalism are unanswerable, I cannot overcome a squeamish prejudice against it. But squeamishness is unmanly and against nature. Proclaim it on the housetops, shout it in the market, Nature is not squeamish! Cannibalism is the most practicable and perhaps the most pleasant of Nature's remedies for supersaturation of population. You both eat your cake and have it, so to speak. Birth control is impracticable, because the Churches are against it; but there are, I believe, religious sanctions for cannibalism.

That, however, is an aside. Elimination of that exotic and unwholesome growth, Russian industrialism, involved elimination of a million or so 'workers,' and the latter involved cruelty. But cruelty is Nature's method. Read that masterpiece, Maeterlinck's *Life of the Bee*. For fantastic cruelty a pre-Shakespearian English tragedy, a history of Byzantine court-life, the orders of an invading German commander, are nothing to it. Imagine a 'Life of Homo Sapiens' by an angelic Maeterlinck — how gentle would seem the apiary in comparison with the human dispensation!

Yet note, reader, this divine point of philosophy: there is always an even balance in Nature's ledger. Peter is robbed, but Paul has money in 's poke. Sylvia's toilette offsets a fortnight's sweaty toil of a thousand proletarians and the death of the last pink-headed duck. One hero is vicarious compensation for a million 'blind mouths' converted to cannon fodder, for provinces turned from tilth into ossuaries.



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'Nature,' correctly observes Emerson, 'seems to exist for the excellent.' He might have said more correctly, 'Nature exists for the excellent,' that is, for those who excel — heroes. I feel myself 'gathering plumes of speculation.'

Man, however propense to pity, — including self-pity, — however sensitive to suffering, physical or mental, may rise superior to all such feelings or considerations, may rise, so to speak, to Nature's plane, whence the ultimate good is visible, and human miseries cease to be regardable except as necessary microbes in the fermentation of progress. The capacity of such levitation is what alone marks your truly great man; it is your only basis of authentic glory. This is the differentia by which you are to distinguish your great man from lesser fry: that he should be superior to pity, scruple, and the petty human codes of morality or honor, having an eye only to the ultimate good. Men are more or less great according as they approximate to this standard, whereof the supreme representatives in our day have been Wilhelm, Lenin, and Mustapha Kemal.

I said 'ultimate good.' Of course I meant what should seem to the hero in each instance the ultimate good. Alas (but let us have no 'alases'), the vision of even the supremest of heroes — a Lenin, say — is limited. It reaches no further than to a penultimate good or belike one still less ulterior, which he mistakes for the ultimate good. Nature endows him only partially with her attributes. She only sees the ultimate good and employs him for merely one stage of the process thereto. She treats him as cavalierly as the common run of men and sometimes more so. She may use him only as the hammer to strike the spark. So she seems to have used d'Annunzio: whence Fascismo and the bright particular star of Mussolini. Or as an agent to produce reaction, the reaction being the thing. That was the function of poor Wilhelm: he thought to advance Kultur; whereas Nature's object was to destroy it. She employed Lenin as her instrument to conduct the Bolshevist experiment, her object therein being precisely the opposite of that which Lenin proposed to himself.

Lenin had in mind the exaltation of the Russian proletariat. Nature had in view the exaltation of the peasant, the complete reversion of Russia to an agricultural status, Russia as a country of peasant proprietors, the world's chief stronghold of conservatism. Herein is Nature's humorous commonsense most evident. The Russian must be kept unremittingly at primitive toil, else he will think; and if he thinks, his thoughts will be devoted exclusively to the condition of his miserable little soul, to his infinite discomfort. Being on the head of Nature the Humorist, observe the trick she played on Lenin in causing him to enact the ecclesiastical rôle of a Russian Henry VIII. She has played a similar but more malicious trick on Ghazi Mustapha Kemal. Infinite indeed are the whimsies of Nature in dealing with her minions.

But to retrace our steps a little. The ultimate aims of Nature are beneficent, but it is seen that her methods are entirely unsentimental and disregardful of human suffering and the bills of mortality; and that the methods of her minions are of like sort. There's no use railing upon those methods or howling beside Babylonish waters. Your only recourse is Philosophy, whence you may acquire a limited art of levitation sufficient to enable you to contemplate with a certain equanimity and even amusement those human miseries which are incident to evolution.

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## V

Did space allow, I could by a method no less elegant or subtle than that displayed above prove that every nation of Western Europe has immensely benefited by the bouleversement. Of Western Europe? Nay, of all Christendom, and no less of heathendom. Take China, for example; in some respects the most important country of the world. Prior to the Great War, the Chinese were too prone to uncritical acceptance of Western modes and standards. The war had a wholesome disillusionizing effect. Now, if we are to believe Bertrand Russell,—and whom else should we believe?—Young China is distinguished by a beautiful intellectual disinterestedness, by a free spirit of skeptical inquiry, a spirit which reminds Mr. Russell of fifteenth-century Italy.

In Britain the bouleversement has given an immense impetus to the process, already well begun, of decay of the order of things initiated a century and a half ago by the industrial revolution; the end of which process — which that optimist Dean Inge places within two hundred years — will see capitalism and industrialism extinct and the country reverted to an agricultural and pastoral status. Britain will lose her Empire, but recover her own soul and her capacity of producing heroes. It is significant that Britain has produced no hero of the first order these many decades. Certain interesting types, to be sure, she has developed to their elastic limits of beauty, but in the lower categories; such as Lloyd George, the supreme example of a political prestidigitator and funambulist, and Lord Curzon with his marmoreal peevishness, the *reductio ad absurdum* of an aristocrat. From Chatham to Lloyd George, from Sidney to Curzon. It was time for a bouleversement.

For France, the most precious of countries in that she alone, in the eclipse of China, practises a satisfactory art of living — France has recovered her self-confidence and is truly herself again. Alas! not quite, as evidenced by the fact that no French hero of the first water emerged: not even Foch or Poincaré fills the bill, for each is handicapped by the qualities of scrupulous integrity and compassionateness. Your true hero is unmoral and has no bowels — not a bowel. The war, however, was, in restoring self-confidence, worth its cost to France of a million and a half lives and thirty-five billion dollars. Wilhelm is to be thanked, not execrated; no doubt he will in due time have his monument at Paris.

There be many who regret that the Allies did not march on to Berlin; that at the critical moment Nature rounded Foch in the ear with compassionate counsel and snuffed out his glory. But here you have, as Lloyd George would say, a peculiarly striking specimen of Nature's sæcular and humorous methods. The German industrial plant went unscathed; and doubtless it was by Nature's suggestion that the astounding policy of repudiation and mendacity was adopted, from which it has resulted that German industry and commerce (with an industrial plant immensely enlarged and improved, with a new merchant fleet of superefficient types) are in better plight than they were before the war to bid for industrial and commercial supremacy. Germany, you see, is on the up curve, Britain on the down.

It is reserved to Germany to illustrate the utmost hideous possibilities of Industrialism. For the conduct of so sublime an experiment a hero of the right kidney is indicated, one in whom, as Emerson would say, the quality is ripe which is now in request. Presto! there he is: Herr Stinnes, the Hero as

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Profiteer. To him garlands let us bring; — no, shekels; garlands may be dispensed with. Alas and welaway! Whither am I carried? Not 'is,' but 'was,' for Charon has taken Stinnes's obol. Yes: *is*. The historical present, if you please; for Stinnes's soul, like John Brown's, goes marching on. To whom he transmitted the torch in the modern industrial Lampadephoria, does not appear. But something assures my dear heart that he passed it on alight. Herr Stinnes possessed in almost as lush degree as even Lenin the supreme quality of the hero — ruthlessness. To clear the way for his programme, the German middle class, to which the world has thought itself much beholden, was 'liquidated' and, as a trifling by-issue thereof, German children died like flies. Another war — to check the revived *Drang nach Osten, Westen, Norden, Süden* — seems inevitable, but another war is on the cards anyway, to satisfy the intense human curiosity as to the possibilities of the new engines of warfare.

If you ask Italy what the bouleversement has done for her, she will bridle prettily and say: 'I am a first-class Power.' Then, with a charming gesture, she will, like Cornelia, point to her two sons, d'Annunzio and Mussolini, treasures indeed. She will discourse to you with enthusiasm of that marvelous instrument, Fascismo, which the younger son has devised for ridding political vermin, for purging the body politic of peccant humors. Suddenly a steely glint shoots from those lovely eyes. She fingers the hilt of a Forlì dagger at her girdle and exclaims: 'Look! The Mediterranean! It shall again be an Italian lake. To that I dedicate myself!'

Let us not, remembering how extra-legal methods are apt to corrupt the practisers, inquire too curiously in the case of Fascismo whether the cure may not turn out worse than the disease, nor allow the lady's vow to disturb overmuch our millennial dreams.

Of the older son, anon. The younger son intrigues me much. Is he a hero or only a brabbler; will he make good his boasts, or doth he merely talk in Ercles' vein? Is he capable of levitation? His manner of dealing with Parliament, an ill-assorted rout of lily-livered professional politicians, is nothing to our purpose, except that there was a gratuitous brutality in his treatment of those cravens which was quite unlike Julius Cæsar, the perfect Dictator. His behavior in the Epirus affair is of more significance. It began with the right ruthlessness, but it ended tamely. That your hero should give ground, should compromise on occasion, is nothing against him; as witness Lenin. But to do it as frequently as Mussolini has done in his foreign relations must create misgivings. At Lausanne Mussolini approached Curzon with a roar, but was soon eating out of the hand of that benign one. And in connection with the Dalmatian question and the Tangier question, the voice of entrance was that of the King of Beasts, the voice of exit was that of the Sucking Dove. I am afraid that the younger son is not such a 'son of a gun' as mamma could wish. It is such a pity. The condition of supersaturation of population in Italy is intolerable. All that splendid cannon-fodder rotting away unused, so to speak.

Barcelona, already a *colluvies gentium*, became during the war the residence of the leading anarchists, nihilists, communists, and suchlike *ists* of Europe, and Nature seized the opportunity to revive there the Art of Murder, which had suffered such a 'corruptive elongation' from its vigor and flourish in the Middle Ages. The ex periment was proceeding with elegar and beautiful results when that Phili

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tine, Primo de Rivera, trod it out with his elephantine feet. But not, thank Heaven, before the impulse had communicated itself to Germany, to the United States, and to far Japan.

Doubtless the reader is agog to know how the United States has benefited by the bouleversement. We have, of course, benefited incalculably, and perhaps the indirect benefits are not less important than the direct. Prohibition, a Midas superfluity of gold, an immeasurable enhancement of our self-esteem — who shall say that these direct benefits surpass in value the impulse given by the example of Fascismo to the Klan movement or the homicidal inspiration communicated by Spain? The Art of Murder is now solidly established as our characteristic art, as ceramics was the characteristic art of China, sculpture of ancient Hellas, painting of Renaissance Italy. Never again shall it be thrown in our teeth that our only arts are those of plumbing and sanctimoniousness.

I flatter myself that at the least I have given the reader a sound method by which he may infer the happiness of the whole world in the bouleversement, however blind to that happiness may be the ruck of mankind: those 'enormous populations, disgusting, like moving cheese, like hills of ants or of fleas,' as the good Emerson appreciatively describes them.

## VI

I started to write an essay on Dictators; and the above is the strange result. I could not get up any interest in dictators as such, only in heroes; and, to my mortification, I discovered heroes to be, for the most part, colorless instruments of the designs and whimsies of inscrutable and humorous Nature. Vilhelm, for example — a pompous inny. And to think that Nature should be at pains to plant the Golden Horde on the Volga for the sole purpose of producing in the fullness of time, as her supreme hero, a Lenin: a hideous little squint-eyed Tatar entirely devoid of the graces! Dictatorship is an almost invariable incident of heroship (for Carlyle's categories of heroes are absurd, your only hero being a man of action); but your dictator need not smack of the hero at all. Primo de Rivera, for example, is only a high-minded, patriotic, simple gentleman, who in his old age has conceived the quixotic idea of delivering Spain from the joint tyranny of political bosses and profiteers. He has, to be sure, the army behind him; but 't is a precarious support for such a man. His labor's lost. Spain needs a Narvaez *cum* Prim *cum* McDonnell. Ruthless is the word. Then there is little Colonel Plastiras of Greece, who rose above himself to a moment of heroship when he caused the judicial murders, but after fell to his prayers and has now ceased to play dictator. And there 's von Kahr of Bavaria, who lived of a tremble and slept in his boots. Your dictator scarce deserves the name unless he have thereto something of the hero; but if he proceed out-and-out hero, his dictatorship is forgotten in his heroship. Horthy of Hungary is the best living specimen of your dictator proper. He certainly smacks of heroship. He has shown himself ruthless and unscrupulous, but, alas, scarce sufficiently so. There is the crown of Saint Stephen, your Excellency! Seize it and justify our hopes. Of the indubitable heroes *cum* dictator I have sufficiently discoursed: Lenin, Mustapha Kemal, Wilhelm, Stinnes.

It is to be remarked that an age such as ours brings to light a great deal of petty talent in the dictatorial line, as certain ages produce along with two or three great poets a host of poetasters.

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Oblivion hath already engulphed many such names: as von der Goltz, Bermondt, Kapp, Zeligovski, Korfanty. Where are now these gentlemen? Where are the snows of yesteryear?

## VII

I shall conclude with a few remarks on a special type of hero; the hero *manqué*, the foiled hero, of which type the noblest representatives, not only of our own but of all time, are Semenov and d'Annunzio. It is a type which peculiarly engages our interest; for is not every one of us, in a manner of speaking, if not a hero, a hero manqué?

In Semenov, I take it, are joined two conquering strains: that of the Varangians and that of the Mongolians of Mongolia, the blood of Rurik and the blood of Genghis Khan; but the call of the nobler Mongolian blood is the louder. It is a sufficient indication of his genius that at the age of twenty-nine he was Lieutenant-General in the Russian White Army, Ataman of Transbaikal Cossacks, Military and Civil Chief of East Siberia, and Inke or Grand Duke of Mongolia. This astonishing youth conceived the most astounding, the most benevolent, idea that ever agitated a human cerebellum: the idea of a League of Unspoiled Nations, with himself as Supreme Ruler, to include Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, Tibet, Russian Turkestan, Bokhara, Khiva, Afghanistan, Persia, Transcaspia, and Arabia.

No doubt the conception, if realized, would have been broadened to include 'despoiled' nations, so that the greater part of the orb might have been drawn into the league. Those of us who got wind of the project through the treachery of one of Semenov's followers were aghast, expecting momently to hear of his conquering ensigns on the Oxus, the Volga, the Vistula, the Danube — Genghis Khan Redivivus! But he must have offended Nature; perhaps, like Napoleon, by overweening. Nature dealt with him as she dealt with Samson and Antony and many another: she brought in Aphrodite in the person of a little baggage from Astrakhan, who, as it were, clipped the locks of his ambition. Exit Semenov!

I scarce trust myself to speak of d'Annunzio, in whom were combined more talents than in Leonardo himself: poet, warrior, lover, statesman, orator, saint (*in posse*, at least, for he once threatened to take the cowl), 'the world's fresh ornament and only herald to the gaudy spring.' Exhaust the vocabulary of praise and you have not begun to denote him. I cannot but believe that in this instance Nature was jealous of her own darling. Once more she brought in Aphrodite; and now behold 'the expectancy and rose' of the fair world turned Love's martyr — 'quite, quite down.'

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# THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

## ON BECOMING HISTORIC

I DON'T mind growing old — or not very much. I have had, to be sure, to give up hockey and squash, and I have to climb slower than I used to above 8000 feet. On the other hand, I don't have to be optimistic any more about reforming the world, and I no longer feel obliged to keep up with current literature. But what I do mind is being historic. That is a painful experience which has recently come to me. I resent it. It has come to me in several ways. I resent them all. There is no compensation, either.

You become historic when the new generation suddenly begins to take an antiquarian interest in the decade when you were young. That time comes, apparently, after a lapse of about twenty-five years, which may explain why, at college reunions, the class holding its twenty-fifth always seems to the undergraduates so remote and fantastic. I was young in the 1890's, the glorious 1890's, and just within the year, it seems, the new generation has suddenly begun to subject the 1890's to historical scrutiny. Young men are writing whole books about the 1890's. A play has just been revived in New York with the costumes of the 1890's — and they were stranger to the new generation than the costumes of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. In other words I, who remember the 1890's as a part of my life, as perhaps the most vivid part of my life, who know all about them because I was of them, am therefore become a part of history; a part of me may be doubtfully contemporary, but a part of me is certainly historical. I am a sort of record or archive. I feel as if I ought to wear covers.

Even this would n't be so bad if the new generation would consult me; but it does n't. It goes right ahead creating its own myth about the 1890's from the books of Richard Harding Davis and Stephen Crane, just as if they were the 1690's and history had to be constructed from the Restoration dramas. I learn from an article on Stephen Crane, for example, that Harvard College frowned on him, the evidence being a derogatory remark attributed to Barrett Wendell. Now, of course, any of us who were in Harvard in the 1890's could have told this historian that Barrett Wendell's remarks were not always to be taken at their face value, even when correctly quoted, and we could have further told him that in the late 1890's every second writer in Harvard who was n't imitating Pater was imitating Crane. We could have told him of a satiric sonnet that put in the mouth of Charles Eliot Norton the melancholy admonition, 'Back, back to Ruskin and Rossetti!' while the new generation pressed unheeding forward after new gods. We too were in revolt against the past, against propriety, against romanticism. We hailed Shaw, we copied Crane, we discussed what a Harvard professor described as 'the admirably subtle psychology of Mr. d'Annunzio'; in short, we were very much like the youth of to-day.

But the youth of to-day, discovering the 1890's as an interesting historical period, will not have it so. They are busily creating a myth about it — in other words, dear reader of forty-five



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or over, about you and me! We, it seems, were a generation exclusively attempting to be as like Dick Davis's Van Bibber as we could, we spewed Stephen Crane from our midsts, we all read Richard Watson Gilder's *Century Magazine*, we swooned with Eddie Sothern over moonlit sundials, we considered *The Dolly Dialogues* deliciously wicked, and compelled Mark Twain to be a failure in life by our social inhibitions. We did n't know that the Spanish-American War was a tuppenny affair that started us on a jingo career, we considered John D. Rockefeller a great man because he was rich, and we wore very humorous clothes.

It does n't matter a bit what historic relics like you and me say in protest; that is the myth the present is creating about our past. That is history in the process of becoming, if it has not already become. Nothing we can ever say or do now will alter it. History, I have sadly discovered, is what the succeeding generation wants it to be.

You and I, to be sure, did delight to watch Eddie Sothern yearning over a sundial one night — and the next night we hailed Mansfield in *The Chocolate Soldier*. But I notice that to-day our youthful contemporaries alternate O'Neill (or still our Mr. Shaw, for that matter) with Eva Le Gallienne as she kisses her handsome leading-man romantically on the mouth. It is true that many of us looked upon Mr. Rockefeller's fortune with respectful awe; but I am not persuaded by my journeyings about that all of us to-day fail of a similar attitude toward, let us say, Mr. Ford — or even Mr. Wrigley. It is true that a lot of us hurrahed for Dewey at Manila Bay; but it is also true that William Vaughn Moody wrote a certain poem and several gentlemen uttered warning words — and without being jailed for it, either, as would have happened to them some two decades later! It is true that sentimental novels were best sellers in the 90's; but, of course, none is to-day! It is true that Stephen Crane could n't sell to Mr. Gilder's *Century* a story about a harlot; but just how many of Sherwood Anderson's stories have been published in the *Saturday Evening Post?* It is true that our clothes were absurd; do you recall the pointed-toed boots and colored shirts we youths affected? They were as absurd as the colored shirts and plus-fours the boys wear now — really, they were.

However, when it comes to clothes my resentment at being historic grows painfully acute. You too, no doubt, dear reader of my age, have come in recent years upon photographs in an ancient drawer that brought to your face a wistful grin. There she is, in a long skirt that trails the ground, with a wasplike waist, a tight jacket, and sleeves like sausage skins (or else sleeves vastly inflated toward the shoulder like balloons), and poised upon her head, as if about to take flight, a vast bird of a hat! Her hair is done indecently, to show her ears. Her hat is perched so high that she can look at you without appearing to be gazing from the sidewalk at the top of the Woolworth Tower. Her eyebrows are as God made them, even if her waist is not. She has no ankles, nor even feet, until (as you recall) she had to cross the street, when she would reach around behind, grasp a portion of her skirt, and disclose the fact that she wore silk stockings — the hussy! She was also very proud of a silk petticoat which rustled.

Yes, she looks absurd, does n't she? You smile now — but only with one corner of your mouth. For you remember how pretty she was, how alluring

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she was, how your heart jumped at the silken froufrou of that petticoat. She was youth and sex and love! You can smile at her picture after these years, to be sure — and so can she, if she is looking over your shoulder. But damn anybody else who does! (Of course, in the 1890's the editor would n't have permitted that 'damn.') When, for the first time, the actors in a play put on the costumes of the 1890's and paraded them as an historical exhibit, and the audience saw them as something vastly strange and new and laughed hilariously, they were not laughing at the costumes of the 1890's — they were laughing at me; they were making game of my best girl; they were denying that I, in *my* golden youth-time, knew the bliss of love and languishment.

As I said before, I don't mind growing old — or not much — and savoring love and languishment only as a memory. But I *do* resent having that memory scoffed. I do resent being told, in effect, that because the girls of the 90's wore long skirts ginger was not hot i' the mouth. I do resent being an historical record that is opened only to be laughed at. My one hope is to live long enough to read what the coming generation writes about the 1920's, in company with a certain person of twenty-eight who is now myth-making about my youth. How my ancient cackle will resound!

## ON NOT SLEEPING A WINK

We have it on the authority of Sir Thomas Browne that what song the Sirens sang and what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among the women are not beyond conjecture. And indeed one might surmise that the Sirens sang that missing song of the 'gentil Pardoner,' 'Com hider love to me,' and that the fleet of foot concealed himself behind the alias of Atalanta. But had Sir Thomas known our Lottie he would have had a mystery beside which these trifling puzzles are the plainest English. For Lottie is a concrete manifestation, as philosophers would say, of absolute contradiction, *an sich*, *für sich*, and *anundfür sich*.

For Lottie the laws of thought do not exist. That consistency is either desirable or obligatory never enters her mind. She is contemptuous of all evidence, either testimonial or circumstantial. It is as if she were the daughter of some imperious earth-deity, older and wiser than the rational Olympians, and creators of truth.

Lottie, like a thoroughgoing pragmatist, fashions the universe to suit her own ends. For instance, you are sitting in the living-room at 9 P.M., trying to read Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*, or a good cookbook, or Hakluyt's *Voyages*. Your attention, usually captivated by the fascinating text, is distracted by a series of blood-curdling snores which fall through two ceilings like a load of coal down a cellar window. 'Lottie,' you say with resignation, and wait with closed eyes and clenched teeth for the storm to pass.

But if you are naïve enough to ask her at breakfast as she brings the coffee, 'Lottie, did you have a good night?' her jaunty step collapses into a limp, her shiny mahogany face turns green, her glistening eye dulls, and she murmurs stoically, 'I jus' lay there thinkin' an' thinkin' an' waitin' for release. No use askin' me how I slep'. As good as can be 'spected.'

If you intimate that you thought you heard her — sleeping — she replies without confusion, 'Yessir, I heard it too an' I wondered what that noise could be. I think it mus' have been that that kep' me awake.'

If you are still foolish enough to insist, she says, 'I ain't like some people.

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I can snore when I'm wide awake. When the misery takes me, I jus' snore an' snore. I swear an' declare that it seems to help me.'

If you coldly remark that your wife went upstairs to see what on earth could be done to stop the noise and called her name and received no answer, Lottie says with no embarrassment, 'I know. I heard her. But you know I was jus' too weary to answer.'

By then you give in and turn to the morning paper.

This particular eccentricity of Lottie's is shared by most human beings. What puzzles me is that Lottie is wise enough not to deny her snoring, yet so prejudiced as to deny her sleeping. What special taint is supposed to affect people who are presumed to have slept while abed? They will admit the most peculiar behavior, superstitions, petty misdemeanors, bizarre tastes, occasional meanness of disposition, the violation of any of the Ten Commandments, with a pathetic frankness, but in general they agree with Lottie in their reluctance to admit having slept. One would think that it were the unforgivable sin.

The trait is manifested even by infants. When they awake they open their eyes to full width; they stare about with that intensely self-righteous air of guilty persons who think the world believes them innocent. They may have appearances against them, like a soldier who is out of step, but in reality they are free of error. They have been awake all the time. So too, when the time comes for them to go to sleep, they resist the hunger that besets them and go to the length of shrieking to preserve their consciousness. Here is the one thing which they most need; their whole being craves it; they turn from it in terror and must be coaxed, wheedled, and almost hypnotized into accepting it. One would think that they would turn to their pillows with relief after a day's romping. But no, they must whimper for a stay of half an hour, fifteen minutes, ten, any grace that will postpone the absorption of the 'chief nourisher in life's feast.'

I have no solution to offer for this riddle. Several have been offered me. One man, of biological interests, says that in the struggle for life the animal who is always awake can conquer the animal who sleeps and that thus going without sleep has a definite 'survival value.' Another, of a theological turn of mind, lays it to the sin of Pride, which has always led humankind to pretend to be what they are not, which would lead them to insist that they never slept if it were more common to stay awake. A third, a devout Hobbesian, maintains that it is a vestige of human manners in the days of perpetual war, when a premium was put upon watchfulness. A fourth, a Freudian, says that we do such shameful things in sleep that the Censor puts a ban even on mentioning the habit, whence polite people 'retire' and never 'go to bed.' A fifth, a Cynic, says that people always lie anyway, and a sixth, a Skeptic, that their actions are all fundamentally unintelligible. A seventh, — and here I end this enumeration, — who is a very clever person, both the son of a New England clergyman and a leading radical, attributes it to American puritanism, although Lottie herself is the descendant of African and Seminole chieftains. Sleep is a great delight, he maintains, and hence is repudiated by our slave-morality.

It is certain that Orientals have not this scorn of sleep. Their leading philosophy assigns an eternal sleep as the goal of life, and their customs and manners make for repose and calm. Do they not even take drugs to sleep more than nature intended them to, as we Occidentals take stimulants to keep us

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awake? I know nothing of China and of India, but I should like to know whether in those more contemplative civilizations sleep may not be referred to as an accomplishment worthy of congratulation. Perhaps there the polite breakfast-lie takes the form of asserting that one has slept more than facts will prove, and of claiming to have snored like a lawn-mower when in reality one has been as quiet as the moon.

## A VENTURE IN ANTIQUES

I SUPPOSE the alluring Berkshires might safely defy any sensitive spirit who rides through and over and up and down them (if spirits ride) to resist being smitten by the collecting-fever that rages unabated in their bracing air. A cradle, a copper cauldron, a spinning wheel, strewn over somebody's grass-plot — and you are undone. A lustre tea-set, an astral lamp in the window of Dame Prudence's Chimney Corner: and only the callous or immune can afterward flaunt an unembarrassed pocketbook. Ring (*ting-a-ling*) the warning entrance-bell of but one such trap, baited so curiously with the past, and you have surrendered your independence to the powerful old acquisitive instinct of the human race, henceforth to be at the mercy of every secondhand dealer from Atlanta to the sea.

In the numbers of the tribe is its strength. A solitary antiquarian would enjoy a precarious livelihood among his cobwebs. Multiplied, he wields a crescent influence; he incites to cumulative madness; he becomes a cult. To justify him, all must crave old-fangled wares. Where is *your* hundred percentage? Why do *you* revolt?

Now, on our own account, Doris and I are immune. We are not callous; we are merely impoverished by the particular form of our own hobby. We collect lead pencils and postage stamps, not old ones but new ones; and while at first glance our enterprise has about it a picayune look, the magnificent greed with which we pursue it must restore the balance. We cannot fancy enough lead pencils; we cannot fancy enough stamps. We have no penny over for samplers and Sandwich glass — that is, we have none until we encounter the Berkshires.

But in the Berkshires we penetrate the heart of the mystery. We confront its votaries. We admire the competing miscellanies of Cousin Priscilla and her Rival Crony. If Cousin Priscilla brings home a cup plate, the Rival Crony must match it with a preserve dish bought three cents cheaper. If the Rival Crony unearths an opalescent doorknob (with such bits smashed off that to our uninitiated eyes its days of usefulness seem fairly over), then Cousin Priscilla must speed away into the hills to fetch a salt dish at the least. We are on the side of Cousin Priscilla, Doris and I. Shall we not, when we leave the battlefield, send back to her a trophy from far lands?

Vigorously we shake our purses for odd coins lurking in the corners. Does not Cousin Priscilla tell old-world tales of cup plates picked up for thirty-five cents? Let us send her a gross or two!

But Cousin Priscilla, we learn promptly, does not buy her Sandwich glass on Madison Avenue, where our innocence leads us into a kind of commercial pantry shelved with it, modestly ranging from twenty dollars upward. Very fine Sandwich glass, we presume, but uninteresting. Neither would Cousin Priscilla recommend Charles Street in Baltimore and the twenty-dollar sheaves of wheat upon a pair of plates in a neat show-window. To open one's pocketbook so wide is not in the best traditions of the game

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as we have studied it. We turn to a lesser street where junk shops are junkier. *Ting-a-ling* clatter the little bells as we enter with our pennies and our maxims and our doubts. Our maxims are but two: glass must ring, and prices glibly flung at us must never be paid. Our doubts are many, inspired possibly by the knowledge that the Rival Crony is, in an amateurish way, a producer of rarities. We feel ourselves craftily wary and about to be craftily immolated.

Through the little shop we browse. Do you remember, Doris, the set that mother has at home like this one? A sugar bowl, a spoon-holder, a cream pitcher, a covered butter-dish. Did not Cousin Priscilla call this hobnail glass? Mother was ten years old when she bought her set for grandmother's crystal wedding-anniversary. Daily grandmother's small daughter passed the store window where the shining glassware stood; daily she coveted it; daily she was repelled by the prohibitive figure upon it. And by degrees, by an accumulation of nickels (pennies were not then available for Middle-Western parents), mother won possession of her costly crystal. Presumably its novelty in time wore off, or she could not have used the shallow butter-plate as a receptacle for her lone goldfish. She placed her tiny aquarium on the square Sohmer piano, where she could delight in a minimum ocean while she practised her scales. And one day when she rose the goldfish was gone. He was not floundering about upon the vast dry carpet where he should have been. He was invisible. He had vanished into thin air. Only weeks later the piano-tuner removed him from the interior of mother's instrument. Mother paid a dollar for her proud gift. But our dusty little shop wants twelve. Again our doubts surge over us. Yet we continue browsing.

When we finally decide upon a quaint opalescent bowl for Cousin Priscilla, we remember that we must not pay the price its owner aspires to. We observe the correct tactics of the game.

We stalk out of the shop. We return. We ask the price, this time of a second owner, and are quoted a second and more favorable sum. By certain evidence under our sharpened sight the two owners, without conferring in our presence, have agreed. 'He's never offered it so low before,' says the first half-owner, *sotto voce*, joining us from the rear depths of the place.

But she cannot have heard him offer. There's a dubious freemasonry in their accord that again arouses our suspicions. We state our own terms and are briefly pinned to them.

When we reach home after getting the best of an antique dealer, we recall that glass must ring. Hopefully Doris strikes the bowl. A dull thud answers the silver knife. We strike again and again, with identical reactions at every stroke. It is distantly possible that fine glass does not always chime like a beautiful bell, like a tinkling bell at the door of Dame Prudence's Chimney Corner; but this bare hope of an exceptional bowl does not linger fatuously with us. We have, alas, grown very wise.

An illuminating moment flashes back upon us from our conference with the first and concluding half of our antique dealer. 'Don't you,' I inquired of her, 'have difficulty in buying for yourselves, in knowing what is really good?'

A customer, entering, sidled past us at that instant. Our dealer thrust our brown-paper purchase into my arms. She lowered her voice. She dismissed us with a confidential enigma. 'We get bit sometimes *too*,' she whispered.

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# THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

WHAT *Atlantic* reader of ten years' standing has forgotten the Little House on the Marne? The spirited heroine of that story has suffered with the years, and it is now proposed by her friends that the Little House be purchased for the modest sum of $10,000 and that moneys be raised to permit Miss Mildred Aldrich to live during her latter years on the hilltop from which she looked so bravely upon a great event. Readers who feel a debt of gratitude to Miss Aldrich may requite it by forwarding contributions to

Miss Gertrude Stein
27, Rue de Fleurus
Paris, France.

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WE should not know where else to turn for testimony like **Alice Thornton's.** Here is a sensitive and educated woman in a place made brutal for brutal truants. Without sentiment or prejudice, her clear restrained report stands as a solemn indictment of intolerable conditions. Following Miss Thornton's design, this paper is to be read without sentiment or prejudice; it cannot be read without interest. **James Norman Hall,** aviator, author, and voyager to far places, relates a delightful account of a personal adventure. We assume that Mr. Hall's story, 'The Forgotten One,' which appeared foremost in the March *Atlantic,* will not soon be forgotten by our readers. ¶In the Contributors' Column for December, **Caroline Atwater Mason** uttered a stirring call for a spokesman to defend the Old Faith. Herself a contributor to the *Atlantic* in the days of Walter Hines Page's editorship, Mrs. Mason has led its defense with a spirited and spiritual paper. ¶A dissatisfied wage-earner bought a small milk-route, and became a milkman and a **Little Profiteer** in the bargain. With admirable honesty he confesses the effect of 'trust methods' upon his pocketbook and incidentally upon his morals. **D. E. Adams,** the minister of the East Congregational Church at Ware, Massachusetts, convinces us that there are times when 'seeing is believing.'

* * *

**Laurence Binyon,** keeper of prints in the British Museum, is an English poet of a quality long since abundantly recognized. **Nell Shipman,** an actress who 'once had two cars and two homes and a fat salary and about eleven wardrobe-trunks full of duds,' continues her brave account of the tragedy which befell her husband and herself while producing their moving pictures. The first chapter of this narrative appeared in the March *Atlantic.* ¶Labor and business to-day are busy saving time; but how many people make time worth saving? **George W. Alger** has devoted his own leisure to the contemplation of this serious question. ¶The diary of the resolute and intrepid pioneer, **J. F. Triplett,** was copied, photographed, and sent to us by Etta Jean Craig. Miss Craig, a school-teacher in the Elko County High School, Nevada, has organized her classes into an historical society devoted to the preservation of Nevada records and relics — an idea worth noting. **D. W. Fisher** received his Ph.D. at Harvard in 1913 and has subsequently been an instructor in philosophy at Princeton and Dartmouth.

* * *

It was autumn when **Jean Kenyon Mackenzie** sent us her poem. From the accompanying letter we take this sentence: 'Outside the door that is open there is a fall of leaves from the hickory tree, and I do assure you there are neither on the ground nor on the tree any leaves as lovely as those travelers that loiter in the air.' Houghton Mifflin Company are publishing a volume of Miss Mackenzie's verse this spring. **Harry B. Smith** is a collector of rare books and autographs, a literary investigator of prominence, and a writer of



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musical comedy. ¶'With all the studying of American women that I have done,' writes **Gamaliel Bradford**, 'I have found none, except perhaps Emily Dickinson, who has left such letters as Sarah Butler.' This portrait of General Butler's wife is good for wives and husbands generally to look at. We have n't all been taught to approve of General Butler. It is interesting then to see him the adored of a highly intelligent adorer. ¶From Canton, China, comes **Nora Waln's** pretty and characteristic paper. ¶In this and preceding essays, **Rusticus** has shown that the love of a man for a horse is equaled only by the love of a dog for a man. This and the two previous papers in the *Atlantic* form chapters of a volume just published by the Atlantic Monthly Press.

* * *

**George O. May**, one of the leading tax-experts in the country, is the head of Price, Waterhouse and Company of New York. ¶It was the first editor of the *Atlantic* who said in the *Biglow Papers*, 'Don't never prophesy — onless ye know.' **Robert Sencourt's** arresting knowledge of racial Europe has been substantiated by other authorities. **Henry W. Bunn**, following his retirement from twenty years' active service in the army, has been a journalist, writing on European politics with verve and perception.

* * *

To have a problem is apparently a relief to the patient as well as to the advisers of our family affairs.

New York City

My dear Atlantic, —

I want to be a contributor, for I have a problem. It is a relief to have one. I felt out of it before. None of the troubles about what you see when you think you are dead, or meet your mother-in-law, how to behave though married or not quite so, have heretofore been in any day's work of mine. I have not felt worthy to associate with your friendly family in appreciating interesting situations or discovering academic impasses.

My trouble is this: In order to get married a decade or so ago, I had to put my best foot foremost. On account of the high moral standards of the girl I finally succeeded in marrying, I emphasized or allowed to be drawn out my highest idealism and moral standards. I specialized a little in the highest aspirations my nature was capable of. I was for humanity and for the greatest good to the greatest number. It was on that platform that I got the girl's consent, and I just barely got it. Then to get the parents' endorsement, I had to make clear my ability to accomplish things, including the supporting of their daughter in the manner to which she was accustomed. This was done by an even closer margin. Frankly, I had to present the facts in the best possible light. I am now a married man on a platform involving obligations from these two planks.

Now conditions in the world are not entirely satisfactory to my wife. She does not like this 'Jazz Age,' disrespect for laws and uncertain moral standards. She wants downward tendencies stopped; wants things changed for the better; wants me to direct my high moral principles in my able way to accomplish this, and wants it done soon.

Meanwhile, I plod along just getting away with the obvious demands of my position, from day to day; understand little where we are drifting or why, and probably could not do much about it if I did. I am losing my standing at home — either I am not good enough or not able enough, or both.

Should I do anything about it or just drift?

T. S. O.

* * *

What Doctor of Divinity or Psychology can suggest a more necessary complement to his teaching than faith? We publish below one of the scores of letters called forth by Jane Steger's journal.

*January* 15, 1925

Dear Atlantic, —

I feel like congratulating the author of 'Leaves from a Secret Journal,' in the January issue, upon her very wonderful faith in God. It is incredibly beautiful to one who has become emotionally atrophied, so far as religion is concerned.

I was brought up in an atmosphere of deep religious faith, and my introduction to philosophy and the sciences at college came in the nature of a tremendous, though inevitable, shock. Even then I clung to my faith in the fundamentals, such as a personal God and immortality; but two years of behavioristic psychology effected my reluctant conversion to materialism. The heart refused to follow where the mind did not lead, and reason told me that an impersonal Life Force was the most logical of the deistic conceptions. It did n't matter so much in college, where life was filled with examinations, and philosophical discussions.

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and different 'courses'; but I was graduated in '22 (from an Eastern women's college), and since then there has been a void which no substitute can fill.

T. (my husband), one of the 'intellectual sentimentalists' to whom Jane Steger refers, asks tolerantly, 'But why is n't merging with the Infinite at death just as beautiful and desirable as preserving one's identity through countless ages? Is there any particular reason why your identity should be so carefully preserved? Why not enjoy the here and the now, and, since there is no proof either way, let the future take care of itself?'

He does n't understand that if he should die I could n't go on living without some hope, however faint, of being with him again. This, I realize, is a weakness; an unwillingness to face probable facts; and a deluding myself with sentimentalities.

For three years I have been trying to construct my own creed — a creed to which I can subscribe not only emotionally but intellectually. (Why is religion such an affair of the emotions!) Perhaps God is Mind, I say, since reason seems to be the summum bonum of evolution. Our own rationality might be the faintest, farthest emanations of the divine Mind. 'What, mind apart from brain,' exclaims my behavioristic training, rising up in holy horror, 'or thought apart from implicit bodily processes! What heresy!' Psychology, with devilish ingenuity, has a naturalistic explanation for my every postulate. Being of a religious nature, I must worship something; and this wealth of spiritual energy seems gradually to be focusing on T. as its only available outlet. If he should die —!

Churches have become impossible, if only from the personal conflict they engender. The music and the atmosphere give rise to the old familiar emotions, and yet all through the sermon something within me is coldly, impersonally, cynically analyzing and pronouncing judgment. 'Illustrating the projection of the ego . . . an appeal to the emotions. . . . Does n't he know that 's a scientific untruth? . . . . Good drama; wish Professor B. could hear that! . . . reassuring to man's helplessness before cosmic forces . . .' The prayer becomes a farce; the whole service merely an absurd attempt to propitiate a Life Force by songs and prayers and the incense of flowers. I can't, like T., 'enjoy the atmosphere and feel like being a better citizen when I come out.' My intelligence is insulted; I feel tricked, duped, to think that this was allowed to mean so much to me in my childhood and adolescence.

I reject it, but I have no substitute. *Is* there none, *Atlantic?*

'22

It is highly commendable that from the South should come these pertinent literary and historical observations on Mr. Lincoln's poem.

SUMMERVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

In 'The Bear Hunt' Mr. Lincoln — consciously or unconsciously, it matters not — adopted the swing and rhythm of Cowper's famous 'John Gilpin's Ride,' than which, perhaps, there is no more descriptive or graphic poem in the language, showing that Mr. Lincoln did well in choosing his metre for 'The Bear Hunt.' I have read it to one who has been 'in at the death' on just such an occasion as that described in 'The Bear Hunt.' He said no one who had not could have given such a picture of the event.

My Southern friends also know all about the word 'fice' meaning a small nondescript dog, and I find it is in common use hereabouts. But I have yet to find anyone born north of the M. and D. line who had ever heard the word before I called attention to it in Mr. Lincoln's poem.

Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL E. HALE

* * *

Throwing a shoe would have accomplished the same result, though not half so humorously.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

I am no good at crossword puzzles, Edison would run me off the rancho, and the Atlantic Test Questions find me 99 per cent 'dumb,' but —

I spent last evening trying to imagine myself on an ideally smooth plane. I got on. The stated problem calls for presentation of a method of getting off, but that is not my problem. Ever since I succeeded in getting on to the plane my concern has been to stay on it, to find some way to cling to it, to defy inertia, to defeat infinity. Follow my failing efforts and then please, please, tell me the answer or I am lost.

I am sitting on the plane, arms folded, legs straight out before me, my whole body ideally motionless. My mind is in action. It is stirred, let us assume, by A. S. Eve and his Dizzy Arithmetic. I do not dare attempt to fathom the inexplicable (to me) manner in which I have been permitted to sit ideally motionless on an ideally smooth plane. I once essayed ice-skating. Ice, at its best, is not ideally smooth, but it is nearly smooth as well as nearly hard, and although I was seated on it many, many times, the seating was never motionless and sitting at all became almost impossible, then and for some time after-

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ward. Nevertheless, here I am, ideally seated, ideally motionless, on an ideally smooth plane. My mind, however, ideally functioning, tells me this condition will not long obtain. Something will happen.

It does! I am about to sneeze! My nose tingles, ideally. My head goes back, my lungs expand, contract, and the sneeze is history. A single sneeze, but enough. An ideally perfect sneeze, but disastrous to my attempted permanency on this ideally smooth plane. My body has been thrown violently forward from the hips and the convulsion has propelled me backward from my position. I am sliding! The rate is very moderate, but is constant. Unless I can overcome inertia by some other agent than friction I shall slide serenely through all the powers at Eve's command, and eventually, when infinite time and the infinite reaches of the plane have been coincidently passed, will drop swiftly into — But there, no man has dared venture what lies beyond infinity.

I cannot resign myself to this fate! You want me off, but I want me on! My brain by now has ceased to function ideally, but it bids me try to equalize my forward motion by a backward jerk of my trunk. I follow instructions and now I am through, resigned to inexorable fact. I overdid the jerk. Consciousness is here, but Hope is fled. I am on my back. A large lump, radiating astral forms, is developing between my skull and the ideally smooth plane, which I now perceive is not ideally soft. I am sliding head first, as I shall continue to slide until the end comes and you have your answer. I shall die first, but my body matter will slide on and on until it finally slides off into whatever lies beyond infinity. I could win yet if my physical self were ideally responsive to my find, but alas, it is not. I am resigned if only you will find some way to keep me supplied with the *Atlantic* as it issues from the press until I am beyond the boundaries of life.

ALLARD A. CALKINS

* * *

'. . . And much study is a weariness of the flesh.'

NEW YORK CITY

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

'Old P——'s' reflections on teaching, to which he gives voice in your February number, interest me very much. I am glad that he confined his observations to himself and laid down no general laws regarding the age limit for teaching. It may be that he needs a sabbatical year to rest him and to make him eager to take up his teaching once more. However that may be, it is plain that he should not be teaching now, though I am inclined to think his age has nothing to do with his present attitude.

One of the staff at a prominent Teachers College believes, and thinks she has some evidence to back up her belief, that men past forty are not being sent out by the College to responsible positions. This is hardly credible, since it is largely the gray heads and the bald who are the outstanding men of the institution.

A member of my family has recently been administering a teachers college in one of our younger states. When he went there, it was a little struggling institution, with only a few preparatory students and fewer still so-called college-students taking two years of Normal work. When he left, four years later, the secondary work had been eliminated, there were eight hundred real college-students, working toward a degree, and a thousand students in the summer school. All this did not come easily. There was some hard campaigning, for the opposition to progress presented a united front. This man believed that the boys and girls of that state had as good a right to be well educated as those of any other state, so he fought on till he saw the college well on its way, and then resigned to study toward his doctor's degree. He accomplished this task in his late thirties and early forties. I believe his best years of usefulness are before him, for the love of teaching and his interest in youth are inherent in him.

He is only one of many such in our land. One of the most inspiring teachers I ever knew was seventy, and still teaching when he passed on to the Great Teacher. Surely we need all kinds of grist for our teaching mills; the young men and women with their enthusiasm and energy and the older ones with the ripeness, the wisdom, and the tolerance that the years should bring.

It seems to me that the proper title for 'Old P——'s' article should be, 'Am I in the Mood to Teach?'

Yours for good teaching,

M. W. H.

* * *

A candidate for honors! How many individual subscribers to the first year are still in our company?

GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

DEAR EDITOR, —

I have read every number of the *Atlantic Monthly* and nearly all of every number since January 1866, when, being then twenty-one years old, I subscribed for the *Atlantic* and the *New York Weekly Tribune*. The latter I took and read until it was discontinued. And I am now reading the *Atlantic* for January 1925.

Faithfully yours,

STEPHEN PEEBLES

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